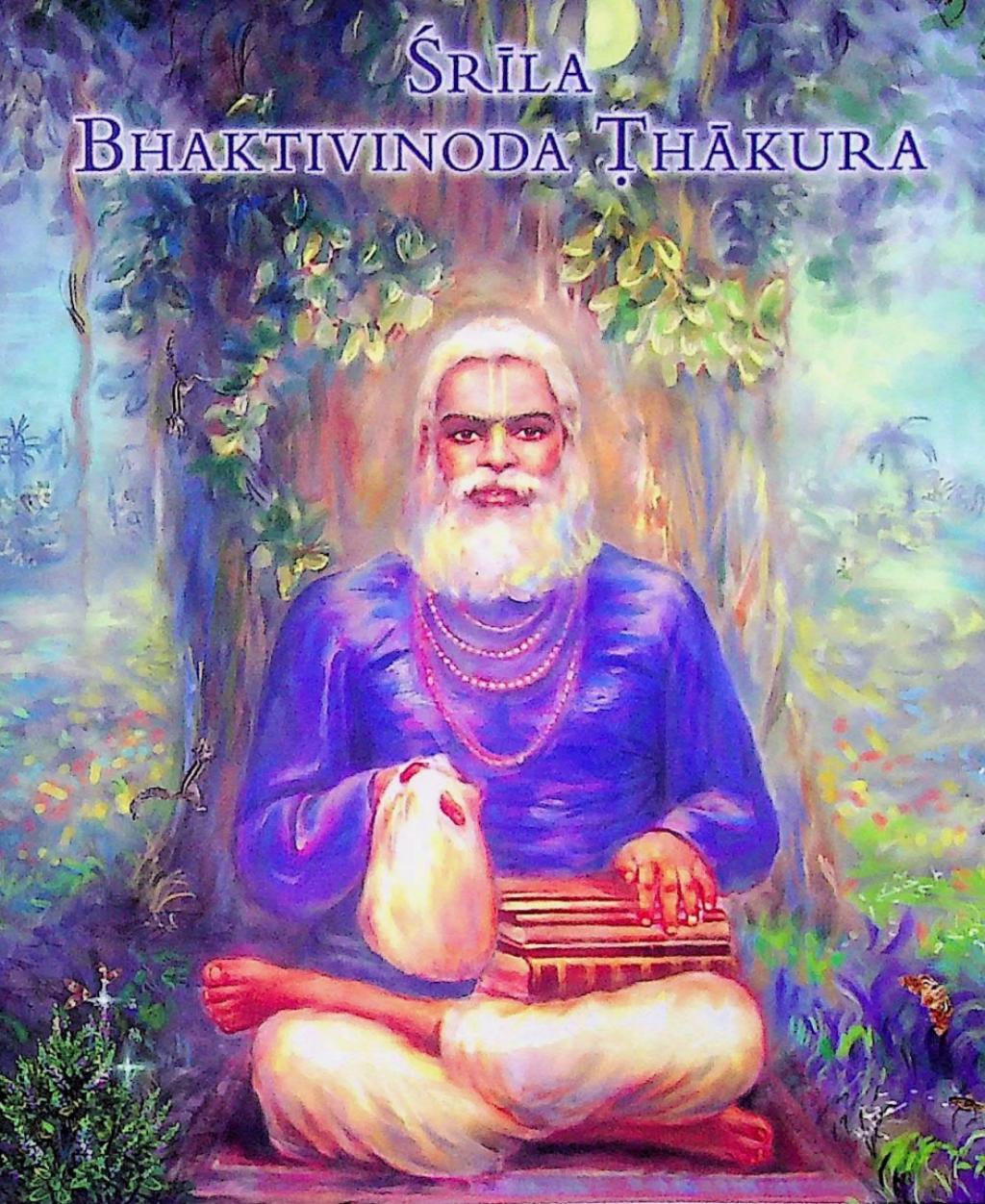


ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA



Translated from the Hindi Edition of

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD
BHAKTIVEDĀNTA NĀRĀYAÑA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA

FOUR RŪPĀNUGA VAIŚNAVA ĀCĀRYAS
OF THE ŚRĪ GAUDĪYA SAMPRADĀYA

Their Instructions, the Specialty of Their Magnanimity,
& an Exposition on the Divine Events of Their Respective Lives

Volume Three

ŚRĪLA
BHAKTIVINODA THĀKURA

Translated from the Hindi Edition of

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD

BHAKTIVEDĀNTA NĀRĀYANA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA



Bhaktabandhav

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

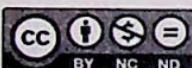
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We humbly offer this book to our beloved Śrīla Gurudeva, *nitya-līlā pravīṣṭa* *om viṣṇupāda* *aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who would always dedicate each of his publications to his Gurudeva, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, with the following words:

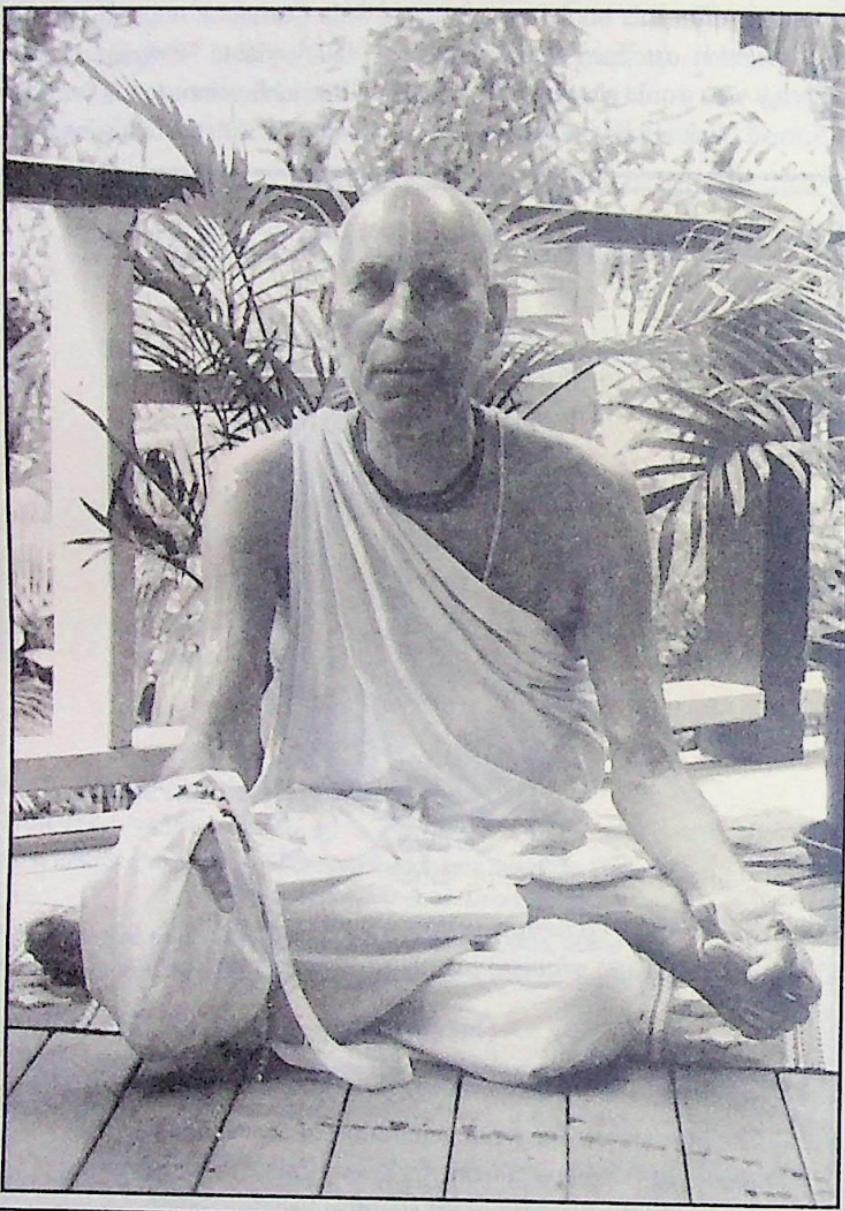
DEDICATED TO MY HOLY MASTER



śrī gaudīya-vedānta-ācārya kesarī
nitya-līlā pravīṣṭa *om viṣṇupāda* *aṣṭottara-śata*

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD
BHAKTI PRAJÑĀNA KEŚAVA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA

The best among the tenth generation of descendants in the
bhāgavata-paramparā from Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya Mahāprabhu,
and the founder of Śrī Gaudīya Vedānta Samīti
and its branches throughout the world.



Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

*vande 'ham śrī guru varam śrī rūpānuga pravaram
vraja-rasa rasikām ca nārāyaṇam tam prapannam*

I adore the greatest of divine masters, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja; he is the foremost follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and is always relishing *vraja-rasa*—I surrender unto him.

*śrī guru caranam vande ramaṇa presthāya bhūtale
rūpānuga bhaktidam ca kṛpa mūrti nārāyaṇam*

I bow down to the lotus feet of the embodiment of mercy, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who is dearly loved by Śrī Ramaṇa-bihārī, and who gives the treasure of *rūpānuga-bhakti*.

*sevā-kuṇje vraje ramye govardhana girau sadā
rādhā-kuṇḍe rasānande tat tat sevā pradāyakam*

Śrīla Gurudeva is eternally residing in the beautiful Sevā-kuṇja of Vraja, at Giri Govardhana, and at Rādhā-kuṇḍa. There, he is immersed in the bliss of nectarean mellows or *rasa*, and he grants entrance into the service of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa as Their maidservant.

*gurum nārāyanākhyam tam vande vinoda presthakam
yat pāda smṛti mātrena dāmodara prasīdati*

I pray to Śrīla Gurudeva, Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who is very dear to Śrī Vinoda Mañjari. Simply by remembering his lotus feet, one pleases Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara.



Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja

*namo sajjana sevaka sajjana preṣṭhāya bhūtale
śrī śrīmad bhaktivedānta vāmana iti nāmine*

I offer my *pranāmas* unto Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī, who is also known as Śrī Sajjan Sevaka, a dear servant to all saintly people of this world.

*māyāpura-dhāma-preṣṭha gaudīya vaiṣṇava sevaka
trṇād-api śrī-vigraha bhaktivedānta vāmana*

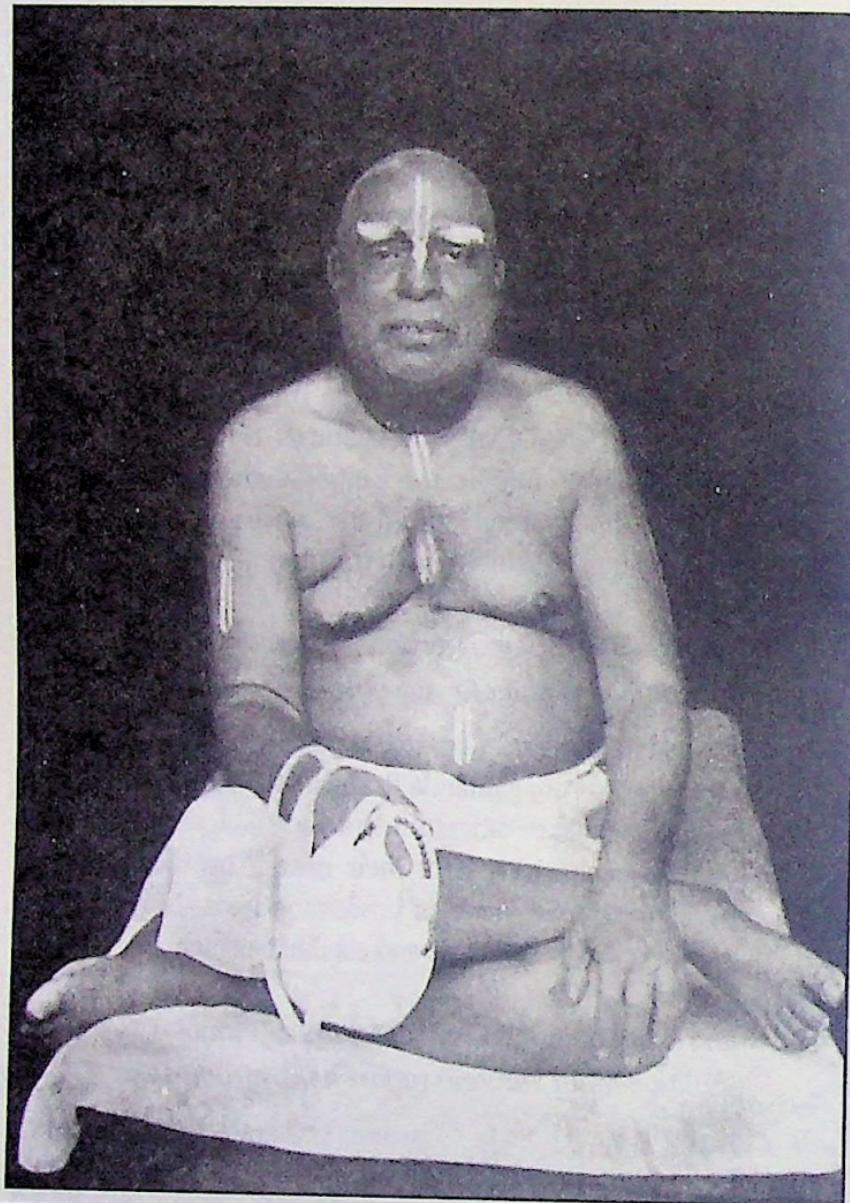
Śrī Māyāpura-dhāma is very dear to Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī and he is very dear to Māyāpura. He is a servant of all Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas, and is the embodiment of humility as expressed by Mahāprabhu: *trṇād-api-sunicena*—considering oneself lower than a piece of straw in the street.

*śrī-vinoda narottama narahari priyatama
śrī-vedānta bhāgavata ṣaḍ-gosvāmī suhṛd ca*

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja is very dear to Śrī Vinoda Da Prabhu, Narottamānanda Brahmācārī, and Narahari Sevā Vigraha Prabhu. He makes others understand Vedānta and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by establishing it in their heart. Through his close friendship with the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, he is always fixed in their conceptions and thus reveals and establishes them to everyone.

*gaura-bhāvamaya tanu ujjvalarasa bhāvaka
bhaktivedānta vāmano rāga-bhakti-pravartaka*

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja is so absorbed in *gaura-bhāva* that his complexion is the same as Gaurāṅga's. He is always immersed in *unnato-ujjvala-rasa*, and he distributes *anurāgamayi-bhakti*.



Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Contents

*namo bhaktivinodāya
sac-cid-ānanda-nāmine
gaura-śakti-svarūpāya
rūpānuga-varāya te*

I offer *praṇāma* to you, Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the foremost of *rūpānugas* and the personal manifestation of Śrī Gaurāṅga's *śakti* [Gadādhara Paṇḍita].

*viśveṣu caitanya kathā pracārī
māhātmya śāṁsi guru vaiṣṇavānām
nāma grahādarśa iha smṛtiḥ kim
citte bhaved bhaktivinoda-devaḥ*

When will that divine personality, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who has propagated the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu throughout the whole world, who has proclaimed the glories of Śrī Guru and Vaiṣṇavas, and who has demonstrated the exemplary method for chanting Śrī Nāma, forever be remembered in my heart?

CONTENTS

An Offering.....	1
Introduction	3
Maṅgalācaraṇa.....	7
His Appearance.....	7
The Place of His Appearance.....	7
The Condition of Bengal During the Thākura's Appearance	8
The Family Lineage of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura	13
The Reason for Ānandacandra's Residence in Ulagrāma.....	16
Worldly Caste Distinction Can Never be the Cause for Hari-bhakti.....	16
A Member of Śrī Gaurangadeva's Family	17
The Thākura's Splendor During His Infancy	18
The Thākura's Student Life	18
~ The Happiness of the Mind After Attaining Tattva-jñāna (Realized Knowledge).....	26
~ Firm Faith in the Lord's Name.....	27
~ The Departure of Śrī Anandacandra	28
Marriage.....	30
Kedāranātha goes to Kolkata.....	31
Maniśī Kāśiprasāda Ghoṣa	31
Residence in Kāśiprasāda's Home and the Beginning of Studies	31
Meeting with the Kartābhajā-sampradāya	32
Efforts of the Kartābhajās to Convince Kedāranātha to Join Them.....	33

The Foretelling of the Kartābhajās	34
The Real Reason for Associating with the Members of the Kartābhajā Group	35
Beginning the Discussion of Bhakti Literature	36
Discussing the Bhāgavata with His Childhood Friends.....	36
Taste for Reading Scriptures	37
Viśva Vidyālaya.....	37
Śrī Kedāranātha and Keśavacandra Sena	38
George Thompson Sāheb's Instructions on Oration to Kedāranātha.....	38
Kedāranātha's Ideal.....	39
The Poriade, Duff Sāheb, and Gaṅgācaraṇa Sena	39
The Publication of Kedāranātha's Poems in the Library Gazette.....	40
A Deadly Contagion in Ulā, and Kedāranātha's Arrival in the Home of Manīśī Devendranātha Thākura.....	41
Friendship with Manīśī Dvijendranatha Thākura and a Discussion of Western Literature.....	41
Kedāranātha's Liking for the Truth.....	42
Śrī Kedāranātha's Neutral Stance.....	42
The Brahma-dharma Philosophy	43
Christianity and Brahma-dharma.....	44
The Armed Mutiny.....	45
~ Mahārāja Mahātāpacandra	45
Proceeding Towards Nilācala	47
The Activities of the Harijanas	48

The Letter of Pañḍita Īśvaracandra Vidyāsāgara	48
The First Darśana of Jagannātha (Nilācalanātha)	49
‘Śrī Caitanya-gīta’ and Śrī Saccidānanda-Premālāñkara	49
Kedāranātha Arrives in Chuṭi-grāma	50
Teaching in a School of Cuttack	50
Maths of Odisha	50
Medinīpura	51
The New Philosophy of Brahma-dharma and Kedāranātha	51
The Search for Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta	51
A Discourse Spoken by Kedāranātha in the Literary Society and the Astonishment of Rājanārāyaṇa Bāsu	52
Śrī Kedāranātha's Verdict on the Three classes of Men in the Society of Medinīpura	52
~ Those Devoid of Morality	52
~ The Present Day Followers of Brahma-dharma	54
~ The Mundane Fruitive Smārtas	54
Vardhamāna	55
Bhrātrā-samāja and Brahma-samāja	56
Chāprā, Darśana of Gautama-āśrama, and Gautama Speech	56
A Visit to West India and a Conversation with King Rādhākānta on the Essence of the Scriptures	57
Finding the Caitanya-caritāmṛta in Dinājpura	57
Śrī Kedāranātha's Innate Transcendental Knowledge	58
Efforts by the Brahma-samāja and the Hindu Society to Make Śrī Kedāranātha One of their Own	60
Manohara Sāhī Kīrtana and Śrī Kedāranātha	61
Traveling to Puruṣottama-dhāma with the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and Caitanya-caritāmṛta in hand	61

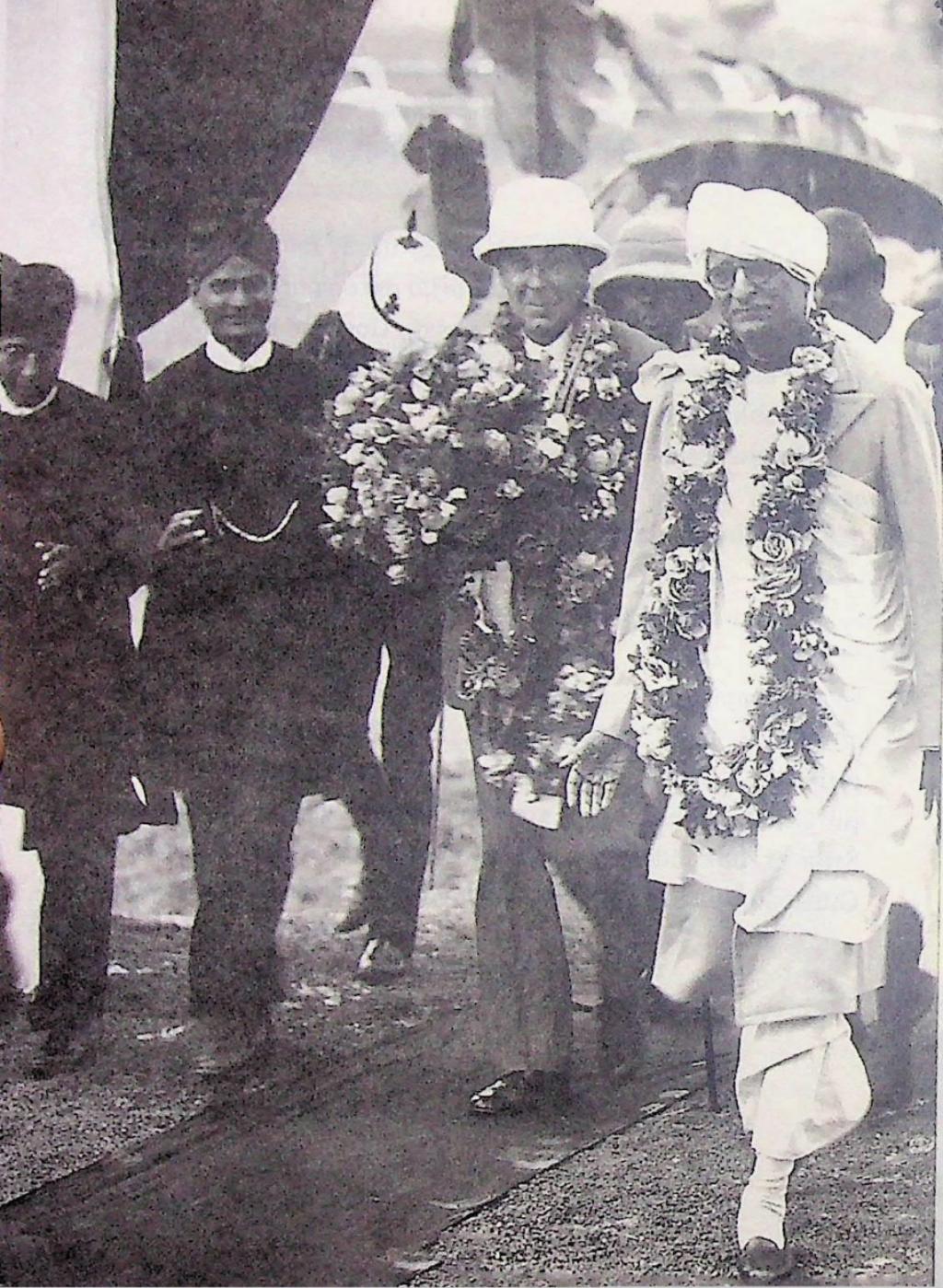
The Condition of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura	
while Having the Darśana of Śrī Jagannāthadeva	62
The Second Darśana	66
The Third Darśana	71
Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura—Deputy Magistrate of Puri	
and Biskiṣaṇa	76
The Birth of Vimala-prasāda	94
Preaching Services	95
The Manifestation of Māyāpura and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda	
Thākura's Preaching Services	106
Preaching in Kolkata	110
Upendracandra Mitra	113
Visiting Vraja-maṇḍala and Associating with Vaiṣṇava	
Sārvabhauma	116
Śrī Māyāpura's Sevā	118
The Preaching of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura	120
A Delineation of Daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma	124
Bhaktivinoda, He who Cheats the Opposed	127
Bhaktivinoda, He who Opposed the Atheists' Views	130
The Line of Śrī Bhaktivinoda	131
Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrī Gauḍiya Gīti-guccha	133
Kalyāṇa-kalpataru	154
The Three Divisions of Kalyāṇa-kalpataru	156
Upadeśa—the First Branch of Kalyāṇa-kalpataru	158
Upalabdhi—the Second Branch of Kalyāṇa-kalpataru	175
(1) Anutāpa-lakṣaṇa Upalabdhi	175
(2) Nirveda-lakṣaṇa Upalabdhi	180
(3) Sambandha-abhideya-prayojana-vijñāna-lakṣaṇa Upalabdhi	186

Ucchāvāsa—the Third Branch of Kalyāṇa-kalpataru.....	191
(1) Dainyamayī Prārthanā	191
(2) Lālasamayī Prārthanā	194
(3) Vijñapti.....	201
Gītāvalī.....	210
(1) Aruṇodaya-kīrtana	211
(2) Ārati-kīrtana.....	214
(3) Prasāda-sevā-kālīna-kīrtana	216
(4) Śrī Nagara-kīrtana.....	223
(5) Śrī Nāma-kīrtana.....	227
(6) Śreya-nirṇaya.....	231
(7) Śrī Nāmāṣṭaka.....	237
(8) Śrī Rādhāṣṭaka.....	239
(9) Śrīman Mahāprabhura Śata Nāma – One Hundred Names of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.....	245
(10) Śrī Kṛṣṇera Viṁśottara Śata Nāma – One Hundred and Twenty Names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa	246
Gītāmālā.....	247
~ Śoka-śātana	254
~ Śrī Śrī Rūpānuga Bhajana-Darpaṇa	256
~ Siddhi-lālasā	260
Bāula-saṅgīta	265
Nāmahaṭṭa and Dālālera-gāna	275
Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's Translations	284

AN OFFERING

This book manifested by the mercy of my most worshipable spiritual master, *nitya līlā praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-sata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who always endeavors to increase the happiness of his Gurudeva, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

On the basis of the precepts of the Four Ācāryas, and especially on the foundation of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *acintya-bheda-abheda-siddhānta* (philosophical principles based on simultaneous oneness and difference between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His potencies), he revealed the misconceptions of Śaṅkarācārya's line of thought. He proved how they were completely contrary to the Vedānta, and its natural commentary, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. By making the path of pure *bhakti* bereft of thorns, and by manifesting the pristine, pure line of *bhakti*, he continually brings great happiness to Śrīla Prabhupāda. This book, which has manifested by Śrīla Gurupāda-padma's grace, is offered into his very hands.



INTRODUCTION

By the causeless mercy and inspiration of *paramārādhya* Guru-pāda-pādma *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottaraśata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, this book, entitled, "Rūpānuga Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas" is being presented to the readers. This book contains the specialties of the teachings of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. It also embodies their priceless contributions. The transcendental lives of our *ācāryas* are extensively described in this book. Therefore, I consider myself greatly fortunate to be able to present this book to the blessed readers.

After publishing Śrīla Guru Mahārāja's biography, which contains his unparalleled teachings and contributions, on the appearance day of his centennial year (1998), I had a strong desire in my heart to publish a book on the lives and teachings of Param Gurudeva, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura; Parātpara Gurudeva, Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja; Param Parātpara Gurudeva, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura; and Parameṣṭi Gurudeva, Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. Although I was fully engaged in preaching the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, I was unable to check my desire to publish such a book. Today is a very auspicious day, because I have now fulfilled my desire. Therefore, I consider myself to be very fortunate.

By the special blessings of my *paramārādhya* Śrīla Gurudeva, after receiving his mercy, I started the service of publishing this book during the previous year. Although the lives and teachings of the four Svarūpa-Rūpānuga Ācāryas have been detailed in many

books that have been published in Bengali, Hindi, and English, I have tried to fulfill the innermost heart's desire of my Guru Mahārāja, by presenting this book, which is an unprecedented collection of the specialties of our *ācāryas'* teachings, contributions, and pastimes, in a concise manner. The line of the Rūpānugas will be preserved by careful study of this book.

I have firm faith that upon imbibing the conduct and teachings from the lives of our Gaudīya Ācāryas, the faithful will receive the qualification to attain their spiritual status. By examining their lives, the sincere *sādhakas* will become conversant with their *sādhana* and, as a result, their path of devotion will become firmly fixed.

By following the teachings and imbibing the conduct of our predecessor *ācāryas*, the Gaudīyas, who are the followers of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, will realize how the Guru-varga are fully realized in the moods and conduct of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. He has been described by Śrīla Kavi Karṇapūra Gosvāmī in the following *śloka*:

*priya-svarūpe dayitā-svarūpe
prema-svarūpe sahajābhirūpe
nijānurūpe prabhur eka-rūpe
tatāna-rūpe sva-vilāsa-rūpe*

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, whose dear friend is Svarūpa Dāmodara, is the exact replica of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and he is very, very dear to the Lord. Being the embodiment of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's ecstatic love, Rūpa Gosvāmī is naturally very beautiful. He very carefully followed the principles enunciated by the Lord, and he was a competent person to explain properly the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu expanded His mercy to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī just so he could render service by writing transcendental literature.

This book has been compiled from the essays published in Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Śrī Sajjana Toṣanī*, Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's weekly journal—the *Gaudiya*, and the Dainik *Nadīyā Prakāśa*. The book has also been compiled from essays penned by my Guru Mahārāja, and my esteemed godbrother, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja. I pray to Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga-Gāndharvikā-Giridhārī Śrī Śrī Rādhā Vinoda-bihārījī that They bestow Their blessings upon all the devotees who have helped compile and manifest this book.

I have unflinching faith that this book will greatly please Śrīla Gurudeva and the Guru-varga. This book will be greatly respected in the assembly of faithful, sincere devotees. By imbibing the teachings of this book, the reader will become qualified to transcend all the obstacles that present themselves on the path of devotion. Thus, he will gain the eligibility to enter the realm of *rūpānuga-bhajana*.

May the readers accept the essence of this book, and overlook any mistakes that have gone unnoticed during the compilation and publication.

Praying for the mercy of Śrī Hari, Guru, and Vaiṣṇavas,

Tridandī-bhikṣu
Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa

Publishing Team:

Rasik Mohan dāsa, Giridhārī dāsa, Govardhana dāsa, Kṛṣṇa-karunya dāsa



MAÑGALĀCARĀNA

*tvāṁ śīla-rūpa-caritaiḥ parama-prakṛṣṭa
sattvena sāttvikatayā prabalaīś ca śāstraiḥ
prakhyāta-daiva-paramārtha-vidāṁ mataiś ca
naivāsura-prakṛtayāḥ prabhavanti boddhum*

Stotra-ratnam

I offer my obeisance to he who reinforced the current of pure devotion and inspired everyone to achieve their ultimate well-being in this world plagued by desires separate from pleasing Kṛṣṇa. May the current of pure devotional truths enter our heart and empower us to sing about the glories of the spotless life of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

HIS APPEARANCE

By the desire of *kali-yuga pāvana-avatārī* Śrī Gaurasundara, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura appeared in this world on 352 Gaurābda, coinciding to September 2nd, 1838. The Ṭhākura was born on Sunday during the bright fortnight at 7:12 in the evening. This greatest of personalities came in this age to reestablish the line of pure *bhakti*. During the time of his appearance, the family astrologer used a sandglass and a watch to take the time.

THE PLACE OF HIS APPEARANCE

The village of Ulāgrāma is situated ten miles from Śrīdhāma Māyāpura. It lies in the region of Ukhadā-Parganā, which is a part of the Nadīyā district. Another name for Ulāgrāma is Vīranagar.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's grandfather, Śrī Īśvaracandra Mustafi, used to reside in this area. He was a landlord of great repute. His opulence and position in society was unmatched.

He had hundreds of servants and maidservants. Many adored him and held him in high regard. His abode equaled the grandeur of a palace and his presence there made Ulāgrāma shine in the land of Bengal. Ulāgrāma, aided by its joyous festivals, caught the notice of many Westerners, who would regularly visit the village. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura appeared in this very village in the home of his grandfather. The place of his appearance is present even now in Ulāgrāma. The *ādi-guru* of the Kartābhajās, Āulcāñda, was also present in this village. He appeared some time before Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, in the home of Mahādeva Vāruī.

THE CONDITION OF BENGAL DURING THE ṬHĀKURA'S APPEARANCE

When Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura appeared, the condition of Bengal was becoming exactly like how it was before the appearance of Navadvīpa-candra Śrī Gaurasundara. Marriages were arranged for dolls and puppets, and ostentatious displays of wealth were made during the marriage of one's son or daughter. Prayers were recited to Cāṇḍī-devī (Maṅgalācāṇḍī). On the pretext of offering prayers to their worshipable deity, people would sing and dance the entire night while being intoxicated. Black magic and worship of ghosts were performed regularly, as were worship of Śiva, Durgā, Viṣṇu, Ganeśa, and Sūrya—all to fulfill the material interests of the worshipers. Elephants and buffaloes would be made to fight each other. Courtesans would dance, and poets would engage in mundane logic and debate. People would be falsely led into accruing the fruits of material piety, which would result in enjoyment of sense objects. The country's wealth would be speculated on and many would be goaded into the idea of earning illicit wealth.

While describing the condition of society in his autobiography, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote,

"The nights of Jagadhātri's worship always flash in my mind. Many soldiers would hold lanterns and conduct the worship of Jagadhātri-devī. Gentlemen from Śāntipura and Rāṇāghāṭa would wear coats and arrive for the worship. People could be seen in all four directions. The effulgence made it seem that the place had been transformed into Kurukṣetra. There would be extravagant displays of firecrackers that would light up the sky. Dancers would exhibit artistic displays and women would dance while onlookers showered money on them. Everyone was drawn to sense gratification. The desire to follow *dharma* became greatly stunted. As the night would progress, the poets would sing, and forming two groups, they would debate with each other. The revelry would progress unhindered while everyone would eat.

"Kālī-devī's worship would be celebrated with much grandeur for the duration of the entire night. Although people would derive great happiness from such festivities, many goats would be mercilessly slaughtered and sacrificed. Being driven by the greed to eat these goats, so-called *brāhmaṇa-pāṇḍitas* would flock to these places. The appearance of Ulā and Caṇḍī would herald the start of many festivals in Ulāgrāma. People would gladly assemble to see elephants and buffaloes fighting each other. Elephants would be gathered from many places. Mukhapadyāya's family had a giant buffalo. Its horns were tied together by iron chains. The tusks of elephants would also be tied together by iron chains. An announcement would be made before the elephants and buffaloes were let loose and goaded to fight.

"Fourteen hundred homes in the village belonged to *brāhmaṇas*. Many *kāyasthas* and Āyurvedic doctors also resided in the village. There was no shortage of food in the village. People would maintain their lives with ease and comfort. They gathered after they had finished eating and would sing, dance, and speak many stories to each other. People would also gamble together. Everyone displayed much expertise in singing and playing instruments. The number of overweight *brāhmaṇas* couldn't be counted. The village was full of material sense pleasures and merrymaking. If anyone wanted anything, they could easily procure it from Īśvara Mustafi's house. People would always take medicine, oil, and ghee from his home.

"The village was so big that 56 watchmen always kept guard. 'One must work and make money to eat;' the people of Ulā didn't even know what this statement meant. There was no such day when a festival wouldn't take place in Ulāgrāma. The village was full of joyous frivolity and the residents would always have a smile adorning their faces. There was no room for anxiety in their hearts and everyone was expert in merrymaking. Some of the villagers could be even called delirious.

"Īśa-pāgala, Gaṅgā-pāgala, Peśā-pāgala, Śambhā pāgala;" in this way, even the respected members of society were addressed by such eccentric names and titles as *pāgala*, meaning madman. To perform *varoyārī-pūjā* together, people would become eloquent speakers. They would learn the art from their countrymen and from citizens of other countries and would collect much money as professional speakers. In this way, they bore the expenses for their extravagant festivals.

"Although there was no lacking of any material commodities and facilities, service to Śrī Hari was conspicuous by its absence. Will incidents from the past be able to remind everyone that although they are thriving in accruing comforts and other facilities, their efforts in trying to be happy and peaceful will never bear fruit? This is so because no one can be happy without pleasing Śrī Hari. Who can dispel the illusion of such people? There were all forms of facilities in Bengal even before Śrīman Mahāprabhu's appearance, but the tendency to serve Śrī Hari was lacking. People would mostly spend their entire time in mundane talks and materialistic festivals.

"This condition of society is also mentioned in *Caitanya-Bhāgavata*:

*yebā bhaṭṭācārya, cakravartī, miśra saba
tāhārāo nā jāne saba grantha-anubhāva*

Caitanya-Bhāgavata, Adi 2.24

Even the so-called learned teachers such as Bhaṭṭācārya, Cakravartī, and Miśra had no understanding of the true purpose of the scriptures.

*śāstra paḍāiyā sabe ei karma kare
śrotāra sahitē yama-pāše dubi' mare*

Caitanya-Bhāgavata, Adi 2.25

Though they taught the scriptures, their actions were contrary to the rules of the scripture because they were only engaged in performing *karma* that gave no ultimate fruit. Along with their students, they drowned in the deluge of immorality, and were thus bound up by the ropes of Yama Mahārāja.

"The Bhaṭṭācāryas and Cakravartīs were referred to as expert teachers of the materialistic *karma-kāṇḍa* section of the Vedic literature, but they were unable to grasp the true purports of the scriptures. Although they would make an artificial display of teaching people, they themselves would be absorbed in carrying out acts of materialistic *karma* that were all performed in vain. In reality, such speakers and their listeners are bound by the ropes of Yama Mahārāja and thrown into hell."

By reading Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's personal account, one can see how society was at that time. Mentioning an incident from his childhood, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote, "A person nearing death would call a *brāhmaṇa* and have him recite the *Mahābhārata*. The *brāhmaṇa* would become very happy on the day he would be offered many items and delicious preparations. But he would be very sad on the day nothing was offered to him."

"Women would speak here and there and the children would fall asleep, listening to how dacoits would attack and steal from people. Ulāgrāma would resound with the sound of many musical instruments on the nine days of Navarātri. On the ninth day, many buffaloes and goats would be sacrificed. Women would carry burning embers in bowls on their heads and worship Devī in a special way. The festival of Holi would resound with the joyous cries of all the residents of Ulāgrāma. Colors would be thrown on each other, and people would splash each other with scented and colored water. Roses would also be thrown on each other. The streets would be strewn with the petals of these flowers, and they

would be brightly colored. Even a person standing on the threshold of death would marry many women and spend much wealth to celebrate his polygamy. People competed and praised each other on the pretext of caste, wealth, lineage, and beauty.

"On one side of the village there was a tree underneath which Ulā-devī was worshiped. There was a piece of a stone that was brightly colored with *sindūra*, the red substance that ladies apply on the parting of their hair to signify their wedlock. The residents of the village would call this stone 'Ulā-cāndī.' On the full moon day of Vaiśākha (April–May), people would hold many festivals in the place of Ulā-cāndī. People would gather in two places and carry out two grand ceremonies. People from many regions from India, and even from the West, would then visit Ulāgrāma."

THE FAMILY LINEAGE OF ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA THĀKURA

Now, we will hear about the lineage of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura. The descendants of Citragupta are known as Brahma-kāyasthas in India. Bharata was the descendant of Citragupta, Bharadvāja was the descendant of Bharata, his descendant was Āṅgirā, and the next descendant was Br̥haspati. One of the descendants of this illustrious lineage was Śrī Puruṣottama, the son of Śivadatta. Śrī Puruṣottama came to Bengal on the behest of King Ādisura.

After accepting the renounced order of life, the youngest son of Puruṣottama became known as Kanaka-dāndī. His *Kanaka-prabhā* commentary of the book *Sāragrāhī Vaiśnava Mahimāṣṭaka* can still be seen today. *Sāragrāhī Vaiśnava Mahimāṣṭaka* was

composed in the year 865, and both the book and its commentary contains many wonderful expositions on the principles of pure devotion. These expositions have drawn the hearts of the Vaiṣṇavas towards them. Vaiṣṇavas have accepted the contents of this book with great relish.

A person shouldn't think, "The desire to gain perfection in devotion didn't manifest strongly in the previous ancestors of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura." Renunciation towards sense enjoyment, the desire to follow proper *tattva-siddhānta*, the proper conception of considering Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be Puruṣottama (the Supreme Lord), great respect towards Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's philosophy of *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva* (simultaneous oneness and difference), indifference towards the philosophy of monism—these qualities were seen in the life of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's ancestor, the great Kanaka-dāṇḍī. In his Kanaka-prabhā commentary of the *Sāragrāhī Vaiṣṇava-mahimāṣṭaka* book, Kanaka-dāṇḍīpāda has written:

*gāṅgasaikatake grāme gauḍe govardhanāḥ sudhīḥ
puruṣottoma-sevāyāmāste viṣṇu-jana-priyah
tat prasādādahāṁ sarva-vedānta-sāra-sevayā
grhaṁ tyaktvā haridvāre vasāmi jāhnavī-taṭe*

The date of the commentary's composition has been stated in the foreword:

*śākeṣṭaśatake pañcayaṣṭayabda-saṁyute mayā
kanakera kṛtā tīkā nāmneyāṁ kanakaprabhā*

The seventh and eighth descendants of Śrī Puruṣottama Datta were Vināyaka and his son, Nārāyaṇa. Both of them were royal

ministers. The son of Śrī Puruṣottama Datta's fifth descendant, Kāmadeva, was King Kṛṣṇacandra. True to his name, he had great taste for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy name.

Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu had appeared in the courtyard of King Kṛṣṇacandra with all His associates, and the Lord bestowed His mercy upon him. One of Kṛṣṇacandra's descendants was Madana-mohana, who was especially remembered for his pious nature. He was the object of respect for all the residents of Bengal. The residents of Kolkata especially held him in high regard. People had much affection for him. He had many temples built in Vārāṇasī, and other places of pilgrimage, and also arranged for food, water, and lodging for pilgrims. Moreover, he established steps to deliver ghosts and other subtle beings and nourished the spotless fame of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. His respected son, Rāmatanu, was known for his munificence. This quality of his is still spoken in the homes of Kolkata residents.

Śrī Ānandacandra was the grandson of Madana-Mohana. He was highly religious, simple-hearted, and detached from sense objects. Many people were of the opinion that there was no one who was as beautiful as him in Kolkata. Ānandacandra's wife was Śrīmatī Jagat-Mohinī. It is very rare to find a lady who possessed her qualities of intelligence and simplicity. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was the third son of Ānandacandra and Śrīmatī Jagat-Mohinī. They named their third son Kedāranātha.

The eldest son of Ānandacandra, Abhāyakālī, departed the mortal world even before Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's birth. Another son of Ānandacandra, Kālī-prasanna, and his fourth and fifth sons, Haridāsa and Gauradāsa respectively, departed from this world during Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's infancy.

THE REASON FOR ĀNANDACANDRA'S RESIDENCE IN ULĀGRĀMA

Although Rādhā-vallabha, who was Ānandacandra's father, and thus the grandfather of Kedāranātha, was an original inhabitant of Kolkata, he accepted the *sannyāsa-dharma* because of his attachment to the worship of Śakti, the Lord's potency. Before Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura appeared, he used to reside in a village called, 'Chūṭī,' which was situated in the district of Cuttack, in Odisha. Śrī Ānandacandra left Kolkata, and resided in the home of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's [maternal] grandfather in his village of Ulā. After some time, he left to Odisha to stay with his father. Jagat-Mohini conceived her jewel-like son while she was still in her maternal home. Thus, she brought forth the crowning glory of Mother Earth—the appearance of the divine personality, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Śrī Ānandacandra was not present in Ulāgrāma when his son was born there.

WORLDLY CASTE DISTINCTION CAN NEVER BE THE CAUSE FOR HARI-BHAKTI

Although a great devotee like Kṛṣṇānanda was born in Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's paternal lineage, and although many monasteries were established in Puri by the previous members of the Ṭhākura's lineage, still *avaiṣṇava-dharma* was prevalent in their homes because of their inclination for *pañcopasaka-upāsanā* (worship of Viṣṇu, Śiva, Durgā, Gaṇeśa, and Sūrya). Although the pious Madana-Mohana established Śrīman Caitanya-candra's *pranati-silā* (the stone upon which Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu offered His prostrated obeisances to His ancestors) in Gayā-kṣetra, the descendants of his lineage especially followed the devotees who were

members of Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu's dynasty. Animals were never sacrificed in their practices, unlike the practices of others.

The Vaiṣṇavatā (the quality of being a Vaiṣṇava) of a *sat-sampradāya*, pure spiritual lineage, didn't exist strongly in this lineage. *Hari-bhakti* was not practiced, or respected even, on Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's maternal side. Instead, worldly worship of Śakti and festivals celebrated for the cause of society were prominent. "Aṣṭadhātu Jagat-tārinī," was worshiped everyday in a big temple. She would be taken into the inner chambers of the temple during the worship of Durgā-devī (*durgā-pūjā*). Many buffaloes and goats would be sacrificed on the ninth day of this worship.

A MEMBER OF ŚRĪ GAURANGADEVA'S FAMILY

Regardless of how Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's worldly lineage is viewed by historians, the Ṭhākura himself penned his real lineage on a placard and had it hung on one side of Bhakti-bhavana, his place of residence. We find the proper spiritual lineage of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in the *kīrtana* titled *Guru-paramparā* by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda.

By deeply examining Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura's words that describe the essence of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura's glories, the readers should establish their goal of determining Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura's unprecedented

specialties in the current age. They must repeatedly read these glories with great effort and patience to achieve their goal.

THE THĀKURA'S SPLENDOR DURING HIS INFANCY

Just prior to his father's arrival in Odisha, two year old Kedāranātha composed a two line poem in broken language that predicted his father's arrival. He recited this poem to a crow. The Thākura sang:

kāka, kālakāla, jīngera phula, bābā āseta, nāde baso

"O crow, *kal kal*, flower of the *jīnga* squash, father comes, sit aside."

THE THĀKURA'S STUDENT LIFE

Students and teachers would gather in the courtyard of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura's grandfather. In his autobiography, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has penned the following words that describe his childhood:

"I started going to the school of Kārtika Sarkāra when I became three years of age. I still remember how Kārtika Sarkāra used to discipline us. Everyone used to be very fearful of him. Although I was three years old, I was admitted into the class of five year olds. Kārtika Sarkāra soon stopped teaching us for some unknown reason. Therefore, Yadu Sarkāra and other teachers were given the responsibility of teaching us. It was then arranged that we stay in school until well in the afternoon. The teachers would teach us everyday. Many neighboring children along with myself would attend the classes. The children who were older would act as class monitors and supervise us. If we were late in attending classes, then the monitors would duly escort us to have us meet the

teachers. It was a rule in the school that a late student would be admonished once, but the student who came later would be admonished twice, and the student who came even later would be admonished thrice. In this way, those who would arrive later than the others would be admonished even more."

The students were taught in Bengali until they were six years of age. During this time, an English medium school was established in the home of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's grandfather. A Parsi called Dijar Varet, who was a resident of Candana-nagar, was the principal teacher of this school. When school would end in the afternoon, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura would go to the English speaking school to study English. The teacher Dijāra Vāreṭa would become very happy upon seeing the eagerness and enthusiasm of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He would also inform the fathers of the students who were studious and have these children admitted in his school. The teacher would shower his love and affection on all the students because of their absorption in studying English literature.

Vidyā Vacaspati's school was situated a short distance from the Ṭhākura's home. The school accommodated all the students in the courtyard of the Dīna-dayāmayī temple. Vacaspati Mahāśaya had many students. He would teach them grammar and dictionary usage. The students would also go to his school sometimes in the afternoon, and listen to his discourses in Sanskrit.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura spent his childhood while being raised by all the servants and maidservants in his grandfather's palace. He was always nourished by the love showered by his kith and kin. He was decorated by the unequalled clothes and ornaments that represented his family's opulence. Thus, Śrīla

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gradually blossomed into a young boy. When he became seven years old, he was sent to Krishnanagar by his grandfather at the behest of the King of Krishnanagar, Rājā Śrī Sacandra. Previously, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had never stepped foot outside Ulā-grāma. He would always be accompanied by his house servants. There was never a time when he was alone. Therefore, his servants accompanied him to Krishnanagar to look after him. In regard to his stay at Krishnanagar, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has penned the following words in his autobiography:

"Captain Richardson was the principal of our college. Rāmatanu Lāhirī was the principal Indian teacher of our college. We used to study in a very small classroom. The King's son, Satiścandra Bāhūdara, used to also study with me. After some days, the Prince of Kuchbihara also came to study with us. I was respected by all the students because of my studious nature. After the results of the annual exam came out, I was immediately promoted to the next grade. I also received an award by the teachers. An announcement was made in Ulā that I was the best student. I was praised in all the homes of Ulā-grāma. The elder brother of my grandfather sat me down and fed me *prasāda* with great love. My grandfather also showered me with his special mercy. Principal Dijara Vāreṭa came to the village of Ulā on a Sunday. When he excessively praised me in front of everyone, my grandfather forbid him to do so in my presence. My happiness knew no bounds when I heard these words of praise. But as fate would have it, soon I was no longer the best student. My studies floundered and I was no longer able to be as studious as before."

The second of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's elder brothers was afflicted by Cholera in Krishnanagar. He left his body after reaching Ulā. Therefore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's studies in Krishnanagar ended. Meanwhile, some members of the upper class established an English speaking school in Ulā. The resident of Hālisahara, Śrī Hemacandra Bandhopadyāya, became the head teacher. Rāghava Bhaṭṭācārya, a native of Ulā, became the resident scholar. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, now eight years old, was again admitted into a school of Ulā-grāma. In regard to his boyhood years, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has penned the following words in his autobiography:

"During this age, I was very independent. I would always wander with boys of my age. I would always listen to the recitations of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*. 'Hanumān leapt across the ocean and flew towards Laṅkā, but the demoness Singhikā tried attracting him,' when the orator spoke these words in an arresting manner, I felt delighted. After returning from school, I would then regularly go to listen to these recitations. By listening to these recitations, I became conversant with many histories and pastimes described in our scriptures."

At this time, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's younger brothers, Haridāsa and Gauradāsa, concluded their earthly pastimes.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had the opportunity to witness *tāntrika-upāsanā* in Ulā-grāma while he was still a boy. During this time, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura understood if the perfections attained by *tāntrika-upāsanā* were real or not. In his autobiography, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has spoken the following words that are especially pertinent in this regard:

"If a festival would be celebrated in any home near ours, then I would immediately go to that home to see the festival. A *brahmacārī* used to live near our home. He would offer many prayers in his residence. There was a beautiful temple outside his residence. There was a garden and a place for kindling a sacrificial fire (*havan*) in his residence. The *brahmacārī* used to conduct his worship according to *tantrika-upāsanā*. Many skulls were concealed in a corner of his residence.

Some would say, 'A skull will laugh if you pour milk or the water of Gaṅgā into it.'

Upon listening to these words, I also took a skull and poured some water into it. But I could not listen to anyone laughing; neither did I see anyone laughing. I would always go to the house of Sarvajña to hear him sing. I started learning astrology from Jagat Bhāṭṭācārya when I became nine years of age. I had a strong desire to compile books that were complexly written, and present them in simple language. I started memorizing the words of astrology and I started to understand the signs of astrology.

A philosophy that would arise on a particular day would cease to exist on another day.

One day, I started wandering on the roof of my grandfather's home when dusk set in. I then noticed that the moon was following me at every step.

I thought, 'Is this the same moon I saw in Krishnanagar? How can a small spherical object exist everywhere? It seems there are different moons in different countries. Yet, when I walk with the moon, I feel that there is only one moon.'

I heard a woman say, 'The moon and the sun are brothers. One day, they acceded to a request and visited the home of a devotee to honor *prasāda*. Their mother had previously told them, 'Bring some *prasāda* with you when you return.' The moon brought *sandesa* sweets by concealing them in his nails, but the sun didn't bring anything. Therefore, their mother blessed the moon to have nectar and she cursed the sun to always engage in the thankless task of drying urine and stool.'

After some days I realized that these are the words of a woman, which have no value. I then started to intently read the *Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Kāli Purāṇa*, *Annādā-maṅgala*, and other Bengali books. I started collecting the essence of every book I read. If I ever saw a person who was knowledgeable, I would speak on various spiritual topics with him. Haladhara Miśra used to worship Durgā, Kāli, and Śiva. I felt that Haladhara Miśra used to speak to the gods and goddesses. When I questioned him in this regard, he replied, 'Yes, I speak to them sometimes.'

Believing his words, I then questioned him, 'Haladhara Miśra Mahāśaya, Vacaspati Mahāśaya also stays in the temple for a couple of days regularly, so do the demigods speak to him as well?'

Haladhara Miśra replied, 'Yes, he speaks to them as well.'

When I asked Vacaspati Mahāśaya, he told me, 'Haladhara Miśra has spoken a lie. The demigods don't speak to the humans in the age of Kāli.'

Vacaspati Mahāśaya was a great scholar; therefore, I didn't place much trust in Haladhara Miśra. Rather, I had

more faith in Vacaspati Mahāśaya. Sometimes, during the sweltering heat of an afternoon, I would visit the temple of Lord Śiva. I would speak to the deity when I would see that there was no one except me. I could then hear my echo. I felt that Śiva Thākura was joking with me. I would touch Śiva Thākura and run away.

I thought, 'If Śiva Thākura is really hearing my words, he will catch me. Or, he will punish me by giving me a slap.' But when Śiva Thākura didn't do anything, I then thought that there is no entity present in the Śiva-liṅga.

One day, I went to eat the rose apples that grew in my grandfather's garden. I had heard before that ghosts used to live on top of the rose apple trees. Therefore, I ran away in fear when I came near the rose apple tree. The next day, I thought, 'I must think of a solution to allay my fears, I can then eat as many rose apples as I want.' Rose apples are very beneficial to one during the summer. I asked many people about the existence of ghosts, and none of them ever denied their existence. Becoming very anxious, I sought the advice of Vacaspati Mahāśaya.

Vacaspati Mahāśaya said, 'Yes, ghosts are also subtle beings. Their bodies are very obscure, and their eyes resemble pomegranate seeds.'

On listening to Vacaspati Mahāśaya's words, my fear of ghosts only increased. But, I had to have my share of rose apples. The mother of Chira was a good woman. She used to look after my grandfather's garden. When I told her about my growing fears, she said, 'You will never have to fear any ghost if you chant Śrī Rāma's name.' There was

a maidservant called Jayakālī who spoke the same words. So with great attention I chanted Rāma's names and stood beneath the rose apple tree. To my surprise, I didn't notice any paranormal activities. I then plucked some rose apples and ate to my heart's content.

I then realized, 'Ghosts flee in fear when Rāma's name is chanted.'

I continued chanting Rāma's names until dusk set in. I chanted Rāma's name continuously as I walked through many alleys. I was very happy at heart and thought, 'After so many days, I now have the medicine that makes ghosts flee in great fear.' I had heard that ghosts reside in the room of a person who conducts *yajñas* (fire-sacrifices). I made the ghosts flee from such rooms by chanting Rāma's names.

I thought, 'At last! I can wander fearlessly in the evening.'

A sculptor was employed to make a deity of Jagadhātrī-*devī*. I would sit next to him and ask him many questions. He would patiently answer all my questions.

One day, I asked him, 'Can you say when the goddess will come to reside in this deity?'

He replied, 'The goddess will reside in this deity on the day I give eyes to the deity.'

I then eagerly arrived on the day the eyes were to be given. But, I didn't have *darśana* of the goddess even after the deity was given eyes.

I told the sculptor, 'Goloka-pal made the deity with husk, and then the deity was again made of earth. You then applied chalk powder and decorated the deity with many colors. But the goddess never came to reside in this deity.'

The aged sculptor then replied, 'The goddess will manifest herself in this deity when the *brāhmaṇas* will chant *mantras* and sprinkle water from their pots.'

But I didn't have the audience of the deity even after the *brāhmaṇas* had read all their *mantras*. I realized that the sculptor was a man of knowledge. So, I would regularly go to his house and ask him many questions.

He then told me, 'I don't have any faith in such idol worship. I think that the *brāhmaṇas* cheat people by their rituals to earn money.'

I became very happy upon hearing these words of the *brāhmaṇa*. I then asked about the existence of Parameśvara (the Supreme Lord). He told me, 'Regardless of what others say, except for the One Parameśvara, I don't believe in anyone else. Gods and goddesses are imaginary. I worship that Parameśvara everyday.' I believed these words of the aged sculptor.

The Happiness of the Mind After Attaining Tattva-jñāna (Realized Knowledge)

My eagerness grew everyday. A watchman called Gulām Kān used to guard the assembly hall. He told me that the Supreme Lord's name was Khudā. He told me, 'He existed alone before creation. There was no one else besides Him. He collected the dust of His body and threw it into the ocean. The upper portion of that dirt became the sky, and the lower part became Planet Earth. In this way, after creating this world, he created Ādām Hāuyā. And then, he created humans. We are all the descendants of this Ādām Hāuyā.'

I then asked him, 'Do you believe in Lord Rāma?'

He told me, 'Rāma and Rahīm are the same. He is Khudā.'

I became happy by listening to these words. In regard to ghosts, Gulām Kān said, 'All the ghosts are the children of Satan. But they fear the name of Rahīm.'

Firm Faith in the Lord's Name

My uncle Paraśurāma would tell me, 'Bābā! Everything has been created from nature. The Lord and nature itself are one and the same.'

When I asked the same question to the Sanskrit teachers, I found their answers to be even more perplexing. Yet, I never stopped chanting Rāma's names.

'What is this world? Who are we?' These two questions arose in my mind when I became ten years old. I would think about all these questions continuously.

One day, I thought, 'This world is false. The Supreme Lord is the only truth. I feel I am also the same Supreme Lord. I consider myself to be sad because my condition is similar to the condition of a person who is dreaming in deep sleep. I will happily smile when I will awaken from my dream, and realize that I am the Supreme Lord as well.'

I would also think, 'I am the Creator. I have forgotten myself since a long time. Therefore, I am suffering very much. Yet, I feel that being the Supreme Lord, I am only performing my pastimes. It is because of performing such pastimes that I have forgotten everything and consider myself to be different from this creation.'

My father departed from this mortal realm when I was only eleven years old. The unequaled wealth of Iśvara Mustafi started to gradually diminish. I then became independent. But I started thinking about what would become of me. I only saw darkness in all directions. There was no one left who would care for me. Even so, I continued attending school."

Kedāranātha became independent in his ways even before his father's departure. The boys of this age are beset by many obstacles. Great harm may even befall the boys of such an adolescent age. The root of such harm is *asat-saṅga* (unfavorable association). Yet, Kedāranātha was never even touched by such *asat-saṅga*. The eternally liberated position of Kedāranātha manifested from his very boyhood. He has spoken these words in his autobiography:

"I never involved myself in *asat-saṅga*. Rather, I only involved myself in thinking about various things. I also tried writing poems. I wrote a poem called, '*Ulā-candī-mahatmya*.' The compilation of such prayers cannot be found in any other book. But now, this book cannot be found anywhere."

Kedāranātha wrote the *Ulā-candī-mahatmya* poem and predicted to the residents of this world about how priceless and invaluable his literary contribution would be.

By hearing about these incidents from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura's childhood, the listeners (who can extract the essence) can glean many specialties and instructions from the Thākura's

life. The words spoken by ordinary women were considered as words of the scriptures although they possessed no special value. Although they had placed their faith in the words of *smārta-brāhmaṇas* and *brahmavādīs*, the members of society then neglected their words because of their lack of realization. The welfare of everyone could not be attained by placing their trust in the words of such persons. Ritualistic practices like animal slaughter, alcohol consumption, and associating with women had polluted the minds of many youngsters. As a result, they would be absorbed in the mode of ignorance and they could no longer believe in the Lord. Consequently, they would be bewildered by lamentation and illusion. On the other hand, Kedāraṇātha was never touched by the words of women, the practices of *smārta-brāhmaṇas*, or the behavior of youngsters that wasn't in accordance with the injunctions of the *śāstras*. In contrast to ordinary conceptions and speculative philosophies, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had firm faith in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Mahābhārata*, the principles of the *śāstras*, and in the name of Śrī Rāmacandra. Although he was a mere boy of nine or ten years, his childhood serves as a witness to his unflinching faith in being under the guidance of the scriptures. Although he was surrounded by an environment that was averse to devotion, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was at all times untouched by *asat-saṅga* and by anything that was unfavorable to *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. This quality of his stands prominent and greatly surprises the listeners.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura manifested his eternal service to Kṛṣṇa even while he was still a child. Therefore, the enlightened members of society would tease him and say, "You are the Prahlāda of the demoniac dynasty." The essence of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda

Thākura's instructions from his childhood is, "The devotee must protect himself from *ku-saṅga* (bad association) at all times. You should know that *ku-saṅga* is even more lethal than the deadliest of poison. *Ku-saṅga* can only be forsaken when the devotee is in *sat-saṅga* at all times. Therefore, even while one is still a child, and is going to school—it is imperative for him to also read and discuss the books of our Guru-varga. Or else knowledge (*vidyā*) will become the cause of ignorance (*avidyā*)."

MARRIAGE

The unexpected deaths of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura's brothers, the diminishing of his grandfather's wealth, the death of his father, the impossible task of obtaining the property of his predecessors, and the dearth of a caretaker for the land given by his grandfather, making others illegally occupy the land—seeing all this darkness in Kedāranātha's life, his mother decided to have him married. She thought that consulting twelve year old Kedāranātha or her seven year old daughter would be pointless. Kedāranātha was married to a five year old girl from a respectable family of Rānāghāṭa. After staying at the home of his in-laws for one day, Kedāranātha returned to Ulā with his wife. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has mentioned some details about his marriage in his autobiography. Therein, he has said:

"My marriage was performed like how puppets were married. I couldn't stay alone in the home of my in-laws; therefore, my sister also went with me."

Although he knew everything, he wanted to experience the inconveniences of those who were encumbered by *samsāra*, and

by doing so, he wanted to yield the proper solution that would altogether end the miseries of *samsāra*. With this intention in mind, Kedāranātha agreed to the society's proposal to marry.

KEDĀRANĀTHA GOES TO KOLKATA

Just after Kedāranātha marriage, the residents of Ulā received the news that his grandfather had left his body in Kolkata. Kedāranātha then reached Bhavānīpura (a locality of Kolkata) with his mother by boat. Kedāranātha didn't like Kolkata, which was bad smelling. He returned to Ulā within few days.

MANĪŚI KĀŚĪPRASĀDA GHOSĀ

The descendant of Tulasī Ghoṣa, Kāśīprasāda Ghoṣa Mahāsaya, was a person well educated by the English. His extraordinary contributions to English literature earned him a very high seat in the field of literature, both in India and the West. The home of Kāśīprasāda Bābū can be seen even now in the northern direction of Heduya Puṣkariṇī. Kāśīprasāda Ghoṣa had visited Ulā once. He then presented himself to help Kedāranātha finish his studies in the future.

RESIDENCE IN KĀŚĪPRASĀDA'S HOME AND THE BEGINNING OF STUDIES

Although it wasn't the desire of his mother, Kedāranātha left his mother and sister in Ulā, and along with some well-wishers, he traveled to Kolkata by boat. The lack of facilities in Ulā made him arrive at this decision. After arriving in Kolkata, Kedāranātha started to reside in Kāśīprasāda's home, and he began studying various subjects.

It was during this time that he was admitted into the Hindu charitable institution. Īśvaracandra Nandī Mahāśaya used to teach literature to everyone during this time. He was a truthful person who could control his senses (*jītendriya*). He was also realized in the purports of *dharma-niṣṭha* scriptures. He was a good lecturer as well, who captured many hearts with his eloquence.

Śrī Īśvaracandra Nandī Mahāśaya had great affection for Kedāranātha. After arriving there, Kedāranātha earned many awards for his outstanding performance in his annual exams. He was the winner of many gold medals.

MEETING WITH THE KARTĀBHAJĀ-SAMPRADĀYA

Kedāranātha stayed in Kolkata and studied there for four years. He exhibited the pastime of illness during the first year of his stay. The salty water and the dampness caused by rain made Kedāranātha sick. He didn't recover even after taking different medicines. Therefore, he was told to return to Ulā for some time. Although Kedāranātha didn't want to stop his studies, he left Kolkata with some friends for his health. The group stopped in Śripāṭ Kardaha for some time. When Kedāranātha's mother heard that modern medicine couldn't help her son, she sought the help of a local tanner. The tanner then arranged for Fakīr Candra to visit the next day. Fakīr Candra would cure people by chanting some *mantras*.

Kedāranātha regained health by Fakīr Candra's utterance of *mantras*. By giving Fakīr Candra, a member of the Kartābhajā *saṃpradāya*, the opportunity to display his perfection in chanting *mantras* to cure ailments, Śrī Kedāranātha realized in his very childhood that the members of the Kartābhajā *saṃpradāya* possess greater expertise in worldly matters than in spirituality

itself. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda has detailed the history of the Kartābhajā group in his essay entitled, "Gaudācale Bhaktivinoda." Therein, he has mentioned that the *ādi-guru* of the Kartābhajās (Āulcānda) used to reside in Ulā in the home of Mahādeva Vāruī. Āulcānda had preached his philosophy through 22 Fakīrs. Among the 22 Fakīrs, Rāmaśaraṇa Pāl preached the philosophy of Kartābhajā's in Ghoṣapādā.

EFFORTS OF THE KARTĀBHAJĀS TO CONVINCE KEDĀRANĀTHA TO JOIN THEM

During the time of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's manifestation of the sublimity of devotion, a leading member of the Kartābhajā group called Goloka used to reside in the same place as him. Seeing that the boy Kedārānātha was very qualified, he had him listen to the philosophy of his line. He then told Kedārānātha to follow all the conceptions of his line and then he too would be able to cure the illnesses of many. By admitting Kedārānātha in his *śampradāya*, Goloka wanted to enhance his prestige and standing in society. The reason for such actions were that everyone knew that Kedārānātha never indulged in the acts of cheating anyone while carrying out his duties of *dharma* and other related activities. Indeed, he never supported any incongruous behavior, from his very childhood. Knowing this, Goloka, a *guru* of the Kartābhajās, while keeping in view the well-being and prestige of his *śampradāya*, tried to convince Kedārānātha to accept the role of being an *ācārya* for his *śampradāya*.

Being greedy to fulfill his aspiration, he told Kedārānātha, "Our *dharma* is pure. Violence is not committed to animals, and many gods-goddesses are not worshiped. Acts performed for

the welfare of others, and the pure character of a *sādhu* serve as the foundation of our line. Twenty-two Fakīrs preached this philosophy in 22 places. Among them, the philosophy preached by Rāmacaraṇa Pāl in Ghospādā has many discrepancies. But there are no discrepancies in the philosophy preached by our first Fakīr. Unlike the Jāti-gosāis, we don't accept any titles.

*muci haye śuci haya, yadi kṛṣṇa bhaje
suci haye muci, yadi kṛṣṇa tyaje*

"There is no fault in getting married, but it would be very nice if one's bodily effulgence never leaves his body. According to our philosophy, Yugala-tattva Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are one despite being two. Although They may seem to possess two forms intermittently, They are formless. Much mercy has been bestowed on you because you weren't attracted to the beauty shown by mundane couples, the different gods-goddesses, or even by the character of moralists. Therefore, you will quickly attain *yugala-dhana*."

THE FORETELLING OF THE KARTĀBHĀJĀS

Kedāranātha had the opportunity to listen to all these words in his childhood. After inquiring from everyone, he found out that the Fakīrs of Ulā are members of the Kartābhajā group, and unlike the Fakīrs of Ghospādā, they are well-behaved and of a good character. They can cure bodily ailments and their predictions are not entirely false.

One day, a *guru* of the Kartābhajās told Kedāranātha about a deadly illness that would entirely consume Ulā. He told Kedāranātha, "Ulāgrāma will be destroyed in a few days. People

will die because of a deadly fever. I fear that no one in this village will live to see the next day."

THE REAL REASON FOR ASSOCIATING THE MEMBERS OF THE KARTĀBHĀJĀ GROUP

Śrīman Mahāprabhu wanted to establish the pure *dharma* that He preached for this age through Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. The Lord wanted him to remove all the impurities that would present themselves in His immaculate *prema-dharma*. Thus, Śrīman Mahāprabhu wanted to re-initiate the flow of *suddha-bhakti* and fill everyone's heart with *prema* through the preaching of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Therefore, He arranged for Kedāranātha to meet the members of various lines of thought during His childhood. In this way, he would become conversant with the practices of all the prevalent lines of thought and the members of the different lines of thought would become attracted to Kedāranātha. This was the real intention behind Mahāprabhu's action of making His dear associate appear in such a place, where aversion to the service of the Lord had taken the form of Vaiṣṇavism; in other words, the ways of the Vaiṣṇavas were used to cover their deceitful practices.

From his very childhood, Kedāranātha had the opportunity to understand the practices of the Kartābhajās, Bāuls, Sahajiyās, and other lines of thought that weren't in accordance with the practices of the four authorized *śampradāyas*. After becoming conversant with their erroneous philosophies, he wanted to establish the truth and proclaim to everyone that, "These philosophies don't represent Mahāprabhu's *ātmā-dharma* in any way." He then separated these philosophies from Mahāprabhu's pure *prema-dharma* and paved the way for pure devotion.

BEGINNING THE DISCUSSION OF BHAKTI LITERATURE

Śrī Kedāranātha studied for four years in Kolkata's Hindu charitable institution. In his third year, he started writing English essays for Kāśī Bābū's "The Hindu Intelligencer".¹ He also gave discourses in English at various places. At this time, Kṛṣṇadāsa Pāl and Śambhucandra Mukhopadyāya also accepted the shelter of Kāśī Bābū, and started writing essays for his periodical. In his autobiography, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has written:

"Kṛṣṇadāsa Pāl used to write well, but after some time his writing became more refined than before. He started writing exquisite essays."

Śrī Kedāranātha then started visiting Kolkata's free debating club to listen to the discussions held there. When he would defeat the philosophies of others with his sound logic and argument, his contemporaries would become astonished by bearing witness to his intellectual prowess.

DISCUSSING THE BHĀGAVATA WITH HIS CHILDHOOD FRIENDS

Śrī Kedāranātha would come to Ulā during the time of *durgā-pūjā*. He spent his holidays there while discussing the *bhāgavata* with his relatives and childhood friends. He would present many conclusions of the scriptures to instill faith in the hearts of

¹ The weekly periodical, "The Hindu Intelligencer" is mentioned in the extensive catalogue of modern day Bengali literature. Kāśīprasāda Bābū had started publishing this periodical. He used to personally publish this periodical and he had reserved all rights for it. The periodical was regularly published from 1845 to 1858, but the publication stopped after an armed revolt took place.

those who didn't believe in the existence of Śrī Parameśvara. His childhood activities have been described in the books *Tattva-viveka* and *Tattva-sutra*.

TASTE FOR READING SCRIPTURES

After returning to Kolkata, Kedāranātha started reading all the English books that were related to *tattva-vidyā* (knowledge concerning established spiritual truths). Maniṣī Kāśī Bābū was a well known member of the Indian literati, who had an extensive library. Kedāranātha diligently read each and every book of his library.

VIŚVA VIDYĀLAYA

Kedāranātha was admitted into the undergraduate course of the Hindu school in the year 1858. The Viśva Vidyālaya was unveiled in Kolkata during the same year. Classes were held in the Presidency college. The Hindu school's senior classes were held in the western direction of the college, classes for the Sanskrit college were held in the middle of the college, and classes for the juniors were held in the eastern direction of the college.

The renowned Devendranātha Thākura, a member of the Ādi-brahma Society, had two sons called Satyendranāth Thākura and Gaṇendra Thākura. These two brothers, along with Navagopāla Miśra and the others, were the classmates of Kedāranātha. The entrance exams were also held during the same year. Śrī Kedāranātha's expertise in literature attracted everyone's hearts—students and teachers alike. Their focus was drawn to him in a very short time.

All the poems that Kedāranātha wrote in English would gradually be passed from his teachers to the senior teacher Mr. Clint, who would read his poems with great relish.

ŚRĪ KEDĀRANĀTHA AND KEŚAVACANDRA SENA

A young Hindu man called Keśavacandra Sena had much attachment for literature. He established an assembly called, "British Indian Society" where discussions on literature could take place. Teachers from the West, and even Reverend Dahl Sāheb would attend these discussions. The beauty of Kedāranātha's compositions greatly attracted Keśavacandra Sena. Keśavacandra requested Kedāranātha to become a special member of the assembly.

During this time, gas was introduced in Kolkata. All the elite members of Kolkata's society were invited by police officers to see how a gaslight works. Along with Kāśī Bābū, Kedāranātha went to the Nārikela Gas office during the evening. There, Prasanna Kumāra Ṭhākura, Rāmanātha Ṭhākura, and the other respected members of society gladly welcomed Kedāranātha.

Śrī Kedāranātha would study books everyday in the 'Metcalf hall.' During this time, Pyārīcarāṇa Mitra Mahāśaya was the librarian. It was also during this time that Śrī Kedāranātha started giving discourses in various assembly halls. By personally witnessing Kedāranātha's brilliance, Pādrī Dahl Sāheb and George Thompson Sāheb became greatly attracted to him.

GEORGE THOMPSON SĀHEB'S INSTRUCTIONS ON ORATION TO KEDĀRANĀTHA

One day, George Thompson thought, "How can Kedāranātha become an eloquent speaker?" He then related a personal experience to Kedāranātha. He told Kedāranātha, "When I would be on the way to the Parliament, I would imagine that all the stalks in the field are the members of the Parliament. Therefore, I would speak to the Parliament without any anxiety." After such continued practice,

George Thompson became such a sweet speaker that anyone who heard him became very happy. On the day George Thompson spoke these words, Navagopāla Miśra and Keśavacandra Sena were also present with Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Keśavacandra said, "I will also speak like this in front of little children."

KEDĀRANĀTHA'S IDEAL

Śrī Kedāranātha's discourses completely contradicted George Thompson's words. By reading his biography, we can see that by giving discourses in hundreds of places, Śrī Kedāranātha conveyed the message that, "The speaker of the truth will not present himself by following such a process (as the one George Thompson professed to follow)." When the disciples' consciousness is awakened by the realized words of Śrī Guru-pāda-padma, then the enlightened disciple will perform *kīrtana* of the words he has heard after the tendency to serve has also arisen in his heart.

THE PORIADE, DUFF SĀHEB, AND GAṄGĀCARĀNA SENA

At the end of year 1856, Kedāranātha wrote the first part of a series of poems in the English language called '*The Poriade*'. Kavirāja Gaṅgācarāna Sena and Reverend Duff Sāheb praised Kedāranātha very much after reading his poetry.

According to the desire of Kavirāja Gaṅgācarāna, Śrī Kedāranātha had divided *The Poriade* into two sections. Reverend Duff Sāheb became so impressed by reading Kedāranātha's poetry that he requested Kedāranātha to portray the atrocities that the landlords committed by writing poems about it. But the nature of Kedāranātha was that he was never biased towards pleasing the senses of worldly-minded or business-minded people. Śrī Kedāranātha's innate propensity to compose literature that

presented itself for the welfare of the world was never stunted or derailed by any obstacle. Kavirāja Gaṅgācarāṇa Sena was greatly moved by the literature that Kedāranātha penned, but what he saw was the external covering that veiled Kedāranātha's real intentions.

When Kedāranātha manifested the deity of Līlā-Puruṣottama (who possesses personal features) from his temple of literature, he removed the external covering and opened the gates of this sublime temple. He then revealed his intention that his literature was never meant to please the senses of worldly people unlike other forms of literature that help its readers drown further in the ocean of sense gratification. His literature provided the essence of *rūpānuga* literature that helped everyone offer their heartfelt love at the lotus feet of the Lord.

"The mundane poems penned by worldly people can never be compared to the transcendental poems composed by the crest jewel of poets, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī," such an understanding will only arise in the hearts of an enlightened few.

THE PUBLICATION OF KEDĀRANĀTHA'S POEMS IN THE LIBRARY GAZETTE

During this time, Kedāranātha started studying the works penned by Milton, Carlisle, Haslett, Jeffery, Macauley, Edison, and some others. He would also simultaneously write small poems and have them published in the periodical, "Library Gazette."

One day, after having read Kedāranātha's poems, Śrīmatī Locke invited Kedāranātha to her residence by having Dahl Sāheb convey her request. After having a due discussion with Kedāranātha, Dahl Sāheb extensively praised his literature, and readily accepted his collection, "*The Poriade*."

A DEADLY CONTAGION IN ULĀ AND KEDĀRANĀTHA'S ARRIVAL IN THE HOME OF MANĪŚI DEVENDRANĀTHA THĀKURA

A deadly contagion started spreading in Ulā. Kedāranātha was approximately seventeen years old during this time. While residing in Kāśī Bābū's home in Kolkata, he would regularly speak at the local assembly hall. He would visit the homes of his relatives and peruse various literature. He would mostly visit the home of Śrīyukta Devendranātha every evening.

FRIENDSHIP WITH MANĪŚI DVIJENDRANATHA THĀKURA AND DISCUSSION OF WESTERN LITERATURE

While describing the situation of this time, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has written the following words in his autobiography:

"Śrīyukta Dvijendranātha Thākura was the elder brother of my companion Śrīyukta Satyendranātha Thākura. I treated him like an elder brother as well. If there was anyone who was a dear friend to me, then it was my elder brother Śrī Dvijendranātha Thākura. He occupied a special place in my heart. I would discuss many Sanskrit books with him. I would especially read many scriptures that pointed to the direction of devotion.

"After listening to my philosophy that was gleaned by reading the books of Kant, Goethe, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Swedenborg, Hume, Voltaire, Cousin, and others, my elder brother Dvijendranātha Thākura said, 'Brother, you have deeply studied all their books. I cannot quell your words.' I then spoke about the philosophy I had gleaned in an assembly. Tārakanātha Pālit was my companion, who was a good friend

of mine. He was very happy with what I had spoken, and he arranged for me to speak at the 'British Indian Society.' The members of the society remarked that my views had grown deeper. I also held a rendition of *Vetāl-pañcavimśati* in the English language in the same gathering. Many arguments took place on that day. From that day, youngsters who were of my age started addressing me as a logician.

KEDĀRANĀTHA'S LIKING FOR THE TRUTH

Kedāranātha set an ideal for everyone to follow by his pastimes as a student. Navadvīpa-candra Nimāi Pañḍita also performed such similar pastimes that earned Him the title, "Vādīsimha." He was known as such in the circle of Navadvīpa's scholars.

ŚRĪ KEDĀRANĀTHA'S NEUTRAL STANCE

Śrī Kedāranātha was always on the side of *śrota-vicāra* i.e. giving aural reception to the message of the bona fide scriptures and saints. His nature was to always be neutral and to have firm faith in the message of Divinity. Although he had a close relationship with Dvijendranātha Ṭhākura and Satyendranātha Ṭhākura, who were the older sons of Devendranātha Ṭhākura, the founder of the Ādi-brahma Samāja—he never let their views influence *ātmā-dharma*. Similarly, although he was friends with Keśavacandra Sena, one of the main proponents of the Navavidhana-samāja, he was never even slightly influenced by his views. He never let such diverse views mix with the pure current of *śrauta-siddhānta* (the established principles of the scriptures). It is seen in the lives of *ācāryas*, *mahā-puruṣas*, and many of the world's leading preachers of *dharma* that upon associating with those whose philosophies hovered on the mental platform—they equated

their own philosophies (that were based on sound reasoning and established principles) with the philosophies of such advocates of mental speculation. The reason for such misleading actions was their overwhelming desire to please such salvationists. Also, another reason was their liking to be subservient to the views of those who held a high position in the upper strata of society. By such behavior, they aimed to enhance their prestige and establish themselves as people's favored politicians.

On the other hand, from his childhood, the life of Kedāranātha testified to his stand that the speculating views of people (who held esteemed positions in society) can never adulterate the pure flow of *ātmā-dharma* and *śrota-siddhānta*. Truth is always neutral. This neutrality is never influenced by familial relationships, human transactions, wealth, learning, fame, and the general favor of society. Kedāranātha lived such a life of transcendental ideals, and set the perfect precedent for everyone to follow.

THE BRAHMA-DHARMA PHILOSOPHY

While Kedāranātha was examining many principles in relation to *dharma* during his youth, *brahma-dharma* started establishing its roots in Bengal. Although some of his relatives and friends were initiated and deeply attached to this *brahma-dharma*, Kedāranātha never showed them any special respect. While describing the condition of such a time in his autobiography, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura penned the following words:

"I had heard the discourses of the proponents of *brahma-dharma*, and I had also read their books. To have faith in only one God is a very good understanding—I have also had a firm belief in such an understanding since many years. But I never

developed the slightest taste for the worship and reasoning of the followers of *brahma-dharma*."

CHRISTIANITY AND BRAHMA-DHARMA

Kedāranātha respected the religion of Jesus Christ more than the philosophy of *brahma-dharma*. The reason being that there is a personal conception of God in Christianity. If a God-centered religion lacks a proper understanding of God's potency, and the eternal nature of His name, form, qualities, and pastimes, then such a religion divests God of His Godhood. Such a religion also paves the way for a lack of monotheism. Śrī Kedāranātha wrote the following words:

"I would speak on many spiritual subjects with Dahl Sāheb. According to his direction, I read the Bible and many other books that delineated the tenets of Christianity. I also read many books of Tyaning Sāheb. I also carefully examined the dialogues between Rāmamohana Rāya Mahāsaya and the Padris. During this time, I was so inclined towards reading the books of various religions that I also read the Koran, which was published by Sale. I also read the books of Theodore Parker and Newman. Previously, I would only read books on philosophy, but now I developed a fond liking for reading books based on religion. As a result, I had strong faith in Jesus Christ. Regardless of however much I studied, I never stopped discussing whatever I studied with my elder brother, Dvijendranātha Thākura."

The account of Kedāranātha's stay in Medinīpura has provided an elaborate exposition on this point.

THE ARMED MUTINY

In 1857, a violent revolt of the army took place. Kedāranātha, who was nineteen years old at that time, went to visit different places. Śrī Kedāranātha wrote about this time period:

Mahārāja Mahatāpacandra

"I went to Vardhamāna with Vāneśvara Vidyālaṅkara and a few other scholars. Banesvara Vidyālaṅkara was the editor of the *Tattvabhadini Patrikā*. I spent some days in the hospitality of Mahārāja Mahatapacandra. I then gave my work 'The Poriade' to him."

The year 1858 heralded a new era in not just India's history, but in the history of the entire world. The armed revolt that took place in 1857 had scattered the political sky of India. Mass murders shocked the nation and violence assumed a terrifying form. The atrocities sparked such destruction that the hearts of all the citizens shook in complete fear.

At the end of the year 1526, another famous war had taken place in Pānīpat between Pāthāna Sultān Ibrāhim Lodi and the Mughal emperor Bābar. At that time also, the war had caused a great fire of devastation, consuming the whole of India, and the onset of a new age for the country seemed inevitable. During that time, Lord Gaurasundara, who constantly drowned in the remembrance of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, was living in Nīlācala Jagannātha Puri. While residing there, He would become immersed in the ocean of divine separation. In that state, He would utter the words such as:

kothā kṛṣṇa prāṇanātha murali-vadana

"Where is Kṛṣṇa? Where is My life and soul? Please show

Him to me. Where is He who has a flute adorning His lips?"

On the banks of the ocean, in the company of Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, Rāya Rāmānanda Prabhu, and a few other confidential associates, Śrī Gaurasundara would experience inconceivable moods of separation from Kṛṣṇa. He would manifest the moods of *divyonmāda* and *pralāpa* (moods of transcendental delirium), and while experiencing these, He would remember Kṛṣṇa's pastimes with an intense longing.

The point to note here is that the storm of instability and furor that rocked the country could not even touch the Lord and His associates. The political storm didn't present any obstacle to Śrī Gaurasundara's continuous remembrance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

Fearing the loss of their life, the armed mutiny of 1857 prevented people from venturing outside their homes. Being attached to their relatives and friends, everyone would hide in a corner of their home, but Kedāranātha never resorted to such fearful measures. Kedāranātha started visiting many places even during such turbulent times, just so he could preach the purports of the scriptures. While visiting many such places, he would also speak on the *Bhāgavatam*. Thus, he became a catalyst that effected change in the lives of many.

The violent army revolt also continued the next year, in 1858. The political circles of India were kept busy by the rebellion of the Queen of Jhānsī, Nānā Sāheb, Tāntiya Topī, and Bāhādura Shah. The people of the country were only paying attention to the words of these personalities. That year, "The announcement of the Queen," proclaimed a new beginning for India. People would

only speak of worldly comforts and discomforts. Despite such unending troubles and situations beset by happiness, sorrow, fortune, and misfortune—Kedāranātha never stopped preaching his message that embodied the following words:

“Except for the path of *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*, which is characterized by an intense longing to have the audience of the object of devotion (Kṛṣṇa Himself), there is no other path that leads to one’s eternal auspiciousness.”

To make people realize these words, Kedāranātha dressed himself as a member of contemporary society, because dressing as such extended his reach towards helping the common man. He thus performed the pastime of fulfilling Mahāprabhu’s innermost heart’s desire (*gaura-mano’bhiṣṭa*) by preaching His message. And by doing so, Kedāranātha sowed the seeds of the wish-fulfilling tree of *prema* in the hearts of those who sincerely heard his message of divinity. This act of sowing the seeds of *prema* in everyone’s hearts was the quintessence of his astonishing pastimes.

PROCEEDING TOWARDS NĪLĀCALA

In 1858, Śrī Kedāranātha walked from Cuttack to Jagannātha Puri to have *darśana* of Jagannātha. His only support and direction was his desire to have *darśana* of Bhagavān’s lotus feet. Due to financial constraints, he could not avail himself of any means of transport. Although there were no motor vehicles available then, the Moguls had made a way from Bengal to Puruṣottama-kṣetra Nīlācala.

At the start of the 1900’s, the province of Odisha submitted itself to the rule of the British. Since then, the travelers didn’t have to pay any road tax anymore. During the manifest presence of Śrī

Caitanyadeva, the devotees desiring the *darśana* of Jagannātha had to pay road taxes to the tax collectors of the various provinces. The author of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī) has stated this in his work. Those who have heard the pastime of Śivānanda Sena and the devotees traveling from Bengal to Purī know well that the travelers had to pay a required sum of money to gain entrance into another province. But when Kedāranātha traveled from Cuttack to Purī, he was not asked for any money. It seemed natural that Kedāranātha was never obstructed by any government guards. He only had a little *sattu* (powder roasted grains) with him for keeping his body and soul together.

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE HARIJANAS

The Harijanas are residents of the spiritual world. In regard to the lives of such devotees, history covers the eyes of those who hold ordinary conceptions and prevents them from having factual *darśana* of their transcendental character and life. Just as dust and hail cover the luster of sun rays; similarly, history covers and prevents the rays of truth from entering the hearts of the conditioned souls. Thus, the conditioned souls think of these residents of the spiritual world as being one of them. Similarly, we see that according to history, Kedāranātha's means of employment depended on a letter of recommendation.

THE LETTER OF PĀNDITA ĪŚVARACANDRA VIDYĀSĀGARA

The letter of recommendation was written by Pāndita Īśvaracandra Vidyāsāgara and addressed to a German national called Dr. Royar. The letter read, "A student of mine is going to Odisha to have some work accomplished. By arranging employment for him in

the department of education, his food and lodging will be secured. Although the bearer of this letter was born in an aristocratic family, he is being inconvenienced by not being able to secure a paid position."

THE FIRST DARŚANA OF JAGANNĀTHA (NĪLĀCALANĀTHA)

After arriving in Jagannātha Puri in the early morning, Kedāranātha had his first *darśana* of Śrī Jagannāthadeva. He then honored Jagannātha's *mahā-prasāda* at the home of one of the officials of the education department. While proceeding towards Nilācala, Kedāranātha went past Suvarṇa-rekhā, Bāleśvara, Bhadrak, and reached Yājpura. After staying in Yājpura for two or three days, he arrived in Chuṭi-grāma. Kedāranātha's grandfather used to reside in Chuṭi-grāma. His grandfather was a special *sādhaka* who could see well into one's past, present, and future. Such were his clairvoyant abilities. Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's and Jagannātha's *sevā* were continuously being performed here. Kedāranātha then met Munsef Śiva-prasāda Singh, a resident of Kendrapādā. Śiva-prasāda Singh Mahāśaya established a school in Kendrapādā and made Kedāranātha the principal. Before having *darśana* of Śrī Nīlācalanātha, the best of men, Kedāranātha, was exhibiting such pastimes in this mortal world.

‘ŚRĪ CAITANYA-GĪTA’ AND ŚRĪ SACCIDĀNANDA-PREMĀLAṄKARA

As a fruit of having *darśana* of Śrī Nīlācalanātha for the first time, the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya started to manifest in the heart of Kedāranātha. Although these pastimes started revealing themselves to Kedāranātha, Kedāranātha waited for three years

before writing about them in his autobiography. He then wrote the 'Śrī Caitanya-gīta' with the name Saccidānanda Premālāṅkāra

KEDĀRANĀTHA ARRIVES IN CHUṬI-GRĀMA

Because of his failing health, Śrī Kedāranātha's grandfather requested Kedāranātha to visit him at his home. When Kedāranātha appeared in his grandfather's presence, his grandfather said, "You will become a great Vaiṣṇava." Saying these words, Kedāranātha's grandfather breathed his last.

TEACHING IN A SCHOOL OF CUTTACK

Śrī Kedāranātha started teaching in a school in Cuttack. While residing in Cuttack, Kedāranātha started speaking with Śrīyukta Hili Sāheb. Hili Sāheb was the assistant magistrate and the secretary of the school. In 1859, a discussion was held on the recent introduction of ten new rules in the school. Śrī Kedāranātha gave a discourse during this time. After listening to Kedāranātha's discourse, Hili Sāheb developed great faith in him. When Kedāranātha returned the book, "Alistair Europe" to Hili Sāheb after speaking on it for two months, Hili Sāheb was quick to praise Kedāranātha's brilliance and intellect.

In 1860, Kedāranātha left the school of Cuttack and joined a school in Bhadrak, where he was given the position of the principal. When he was residing in Bhadrak, he worked on his writings.

MATHS OF ODISHA

In his book 'Maths of Odisha,' Kedāranātha discussed the histories of various Odishi temples. William Hunter mentions this book and the descriptions written by Kedāranātha in his own book 'Odisha.'

MEDINIPURA

After leaving his post of being a principal, Kedāranātha accepted the position of a teacher in a school in Medinipura. The well-known follower of *brahma-dharma*, Rājanārāyaṇa Bāsu, was also a teacher in this school. Some people acted under the guidance of Rājanārāyaṇa Bāsu and became attracted to *brahma-dharma* in an ordinary manner. But, the students, teachers, youngsters, and those attached to the truth became followers of Śrī Kedāranātha.

THE NEW PHILOSOPHY OF BRAHMA-DHARMA AND KEDĀRANĀTHA

In his autobiography, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has said, "I had faith in *bhakti* since the time of my childhood. When I was staying in Ulā-grāma, I would become exceedingly happy by listening to *hari-kīrtana*. The worshipers of *śakti* would sacrifice animals and commit murder. They would also kill and eat fish. Only *vaiṣṇava-dharma* is immaculately pure in this world. Everyone is bound to accept this *dharma*. The *dharma* of the *śaktas* contains many forbidden actions, and *brahma-dharma* is devoid of any *rasa*. This consideration had taken its place in my heart."

THE SEARCH FOR ŚRĪ CAITANYA-CARITĀMRITA

When Kedāranātha was in Medinipura, he had a strong desire to read Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, but he could not procure a copy of the book even after a prolonged search. At that time, no one was publishing the Vaiṣṇava scriptures. What to speak of discussing the life and teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, even the historical significance of Mahāprabhu was not discussed by those who held the conception of being the followers of Mahāprabhu. Some

thought of Caitanyadeva as a Vaiṣṇava from Bengal who preached *dharma*, while others only knew that Nityānanda Prabhu was the brother of Mahāprabhu. Many such conceptions existed during the time of Kedāranātha.

A DISCOURSE SPOKEN BY KEDĀRANĀTHA IN THE LITERARY SOCIETY AND THE ASTONISHMENT OF RĀJANĀRĀYAÑA BĀSU

There was a dedicated literary society in Medinīpura. After listening to Kedāranātha speak there, Rājanārāyaṇa Bāsu was exceedingly astonished. He then addressed the assembly and said, "Kedāranātha is most qualified for attaining a very high post."

There was a Farsi called Mr. Thomas who was fondly attached to Kedāranātha. Śrī Kedāranātha and Thomas would write essays together for a newspaper called *The Phoenix*.

ŚRĪ KEDĀRANĀTHA'S VERDICT ON THE THREE CLASSES OF MEN IN THE SOCIETY OF MEDINĪPURA

While staying in Medinīpura, Kedāranātha saw three types of people there:

- (1) A person who is always intoxicated. Such an individual had no regard for morality and *dharma*.
- (2) *Brahma-dharmāvalambhi* (an individual who wants to merge into the effulgence emanating from the Lord's body).
- (3) The Smārta Hindu.

Those Devoid of Morality

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura always considered immorality to be association that is fit to be immediately rejected. He also advised

others to do the same. Those who gratify their senses by using tobacco, opium, and other intoxicants can never be the proponents of pure *dharma*. He embodied this teaching by practicing it in his own life. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's life of Vaiṣṇavism was completely free of any faults. Tobacco, opium, *supari*, and other intoxicants of Kali could never even come close, what to speak of touching him. He used to regularly say that such intoxicants can never be useful for humans. There is a lack of attachment to Kṛṣṇa in the lives of those who are attached to these intoxicants.

In his life, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura never owed anyone a single penny. To accept a bribe is to loose ones independence, therefore he never gave patronage to such sin or offence.

Once, controlled by their desire for wealth, some so-called Vaiṣṇavas who were deeply rooted members of the *prākṛta-sahajīya* society, accepted some bribes and in turn committed themselves to help the Atibādis of Purī (a group that is opposed to Śrī Guru and that was rejected by Mahāprabhu) gain acceptance into the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*. They also made a special request to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to help them in this regard. The Ṭhākura never yielded to their request. Conversely, he was the only person who opposed their endeavors with great determination.

Giriścandra Ghoṣa, a teacher of *natya-vidyā*, approached Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura for his approval in regard to composing a drama for a book he had written on Mahāprabhu's pastimes (*Caitanya-līlā*). By stating his disapproval, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura showed the difference between *prākṛta-sahajīya-dharma* and *śuddha-bhakti*.

The Present Day Followers of Brahma-dharma

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura used to regularly state that the modern *brahma-dharma* philosophy can never correspond to the *svarūpa-dharma* (the constitutional position) of the *jīvas*. He only took the side of *sārvabhaumika-dharma* (the most exalted *dharma*). The *nitya-dharma* (eternal *dharma*) of all the innumerable *jīvas* is the sole *dharma* for everyone. He has explained all these teachings in his book *Prema-pradīpa*, a book that is especially dedicated for the promulgation of everyone's real *dharma* as opposed to the non-eternal, false *dharma*.

The Mundane Fruitive Smārtas

The *karma-jāḍa-smārtas* (mundane brahmins, who are prone to fruitive actions) are attached to *dharma* that hovers on the bodily and mental platform. Their actions are extremely constricted. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was not a supporter of such a constricted line of thought.

"The *dharma* of every *jīva* is to be engaged in pure devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead." Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura only preached this *ātmā-dharma* or *bhakti-dharma*. And he taught by his own example. The requests and pressure of his relatives, and the requests of those who desired to please society, could never displace Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's unflinching faith in *ātmā-dharma*. Neither could their requests make him support any form of mundane *dharma*. The elder son of Devendranātha Ṭhākura (Dvijendranātha Ṭhākura), the proponent of the Navavidhāna society (Keśavacandra Sena), and many famous individuals of the Smārta Hindu society were the childhood friends of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Despite being friends with them, Śrīla

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura never renounced service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, which is the topmost form of *ātmā-dharma*. He never adulterated *ātmā-dharma* with any form of *anātmā-dharma*, that which is against the *ātmā's dharma*, to gain recognition in society. Many people (who wrongly confess to follow *dharma*) have endeavored to equate *dharma* and *adharma*, the spiritual and the material, Kṛṣṇa and *māyā*, *ātmā-dharma* and the *dharma* of the mind. Their only intention in the propagation of such false notions was to gain recognition in society. This plague of speculation could never touch Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, a one-pointed upholder of the all-encompassing *ātmā-dharma*. This was a special quality of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who only preached *ātmā-dharma*.

VARDHAMĀNA

After some time, Śrī Kedāranātha left Medinīpura and took up residence in Vardhamāna. There, he wrote a small book called *Our Wants*. While residing in Vardhamāna, Śrī Kedāranātha met his childhood friend from Ulā, Candraśekhara Bāsū. Candra Bāsū was a follower of the Brahma-samāja. During this time, Navavidhāna-samāja's Keśavacandra Sena visited Vardhamāna. Reverend Lālbihāri De accused Keśavacandra Sena of being a 'Bible thief.'

Someone there requested Kedāranātha to reconcile the differences that were put forward by the members of the Brahma-samāja and the followers of Christianity. Heeding the request, Śrī Kedāranātha showed everyone how the teachings of the *Brahma-samāja* and Christianity were inter-related. He then offered a compromise between the opposing parties,

but both the groups only praised their teachings for upholding the prestige of their respective lines of thought. When Padre Staran spoke in an opposing manner, Kedāranātha gave two discourses with a fitting reply to the Padre.

BHRĀTRĀ-SAMĀJA AND BRAHMA-SAMĀJA

The members of the Brahma-samāja were not happy when Śrī Kedāranātha established the Bhrātri-samāja (the society of universal brotherhood) in Vardhamāna. The reason being that many members of their society left them and joined the society established by Kedāranātha. During one gathering of the members of the Bhrātri-samāja, Kedāranātha gave a discourse in English that pertained to the existence of the soul. Hili Sāheb had come to listen to this discourse.

During this time, Kedāranātha and Dvijendranātha Thākura replied to each other's questions by penning many poems. Two of these poems were published by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura in his book *Sannyāsi*. The rest of the poems were never traced. Śrī Kedāranātha then started deeply contemplating on the purports of the scriptures, and he also taught the essence of the scriptures to many sincere seekers.

CHĀPRĀ, DARŚANA OF GAUTAMA-ĀŚRAMA, AND GAUTAMA SPEECH

Śrī Kedāranātha stayed for some days in Cuyadāngā and strived for the auspiciousness of the local inhabitants there. He then stayed for some time in Rānāghāṭa, after which he proceeded further to Chāprā. It was here that Kedāranātha learnt Urdu and Farsi. While staying in Chāprā, Kedāranātha would also intermittently go to the places of Mafahsvaler. He had *darśana* of the

Gautama Āśrama in a place called Godana. Ahalyā had become a stone in this place. This place was the birthplace of the *Nyāya-sāstra* (scriptures delineating logic). For the betterment of this place and with the intention of opening a school of *nyāya-sāstra*, Kedāranātha arranged for a meeting to take place in Chāprā, in which he delivered a discourse called, 'Gautama speech.' The respected residents of Chāprā accepted Kedāranātha as a well-wishing friend of theirs. Bandhurāyatārā Prasāda Mukhopādhyāya Bāhādūra, a friend of Kedāranātha, wrote to him later to inform him that a school for *nyāya-vidyā* had been opened in Godana as a result of his speech.

A VISIT TO WEST INDIA AND A CONVERSATION WITH KING RĀDHĀKĀNTA ON THE ESSENCE OF THE SCRIPTURES

Kedāranātha started visiting the holy places of West India during the time of Durgā-pūjā. He returned to Chāprā in a few days after visiting Kāśī, Mirjāpūra, Prayāga, Āgra, Mathurā, and Vṛndāvana. In Vṛndāvana, Kedāranātha had a discussion on the essence of the *sāstras* with King Rādhākānta-deva. King Rādhākānta-deva Bāhādūra was reading *Garga-samhitā* during this time. The King gained an entirely new perspective of the scriptures after listening to Kedāranātha speak on *dharma*. He became overjoyed and filled with renewed enthusiasm.

FINDING THE CAITANYA-CARITĀMRITA IN DINĀJPURA

Kedāranātha arrived in Pūrṇiyā after departing from Chāprā. He then left Pūrṇiyā and became the Deputy Magistrate of Dinājpura. Due to Rāyasāheb Kamalalocana Rāya's generosity, wealth-seeking *bābājīs*, *vairāgīs*, and *gosvāmīs* would wander in

Dinājpura. Even the *brāhmaṇa-paṇḍitas* would gather there to secure an income. Some esteemed inhabitants would always visit Kedāranātha and discuss *vaiṣṇava-dharma* with him.

Here, Kedāranātha obtained a copy of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and a translation of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* written down on banyan leaves. Kedāranātha began then continuously studying the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and other *śāstras* related to *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*.

ŚRĪ KEDĀRANĀTHA'S INNATE TRANSCENDENTAL KNOWLEDGE

Śrī Kedāranātha has shed some light on how the revealed, transcendental knowledge of the scriptures became the central subject of his heart. The essence of the scriptures cannot be known by mundane logic, argument, and pride—to instruct everyone on this teaching, the eternally liberated associates of Caitanya Mahāprabhu have displayed a particular pastime of deep contemplation. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, and the other associates of Śrīman Caitanya Mahāprabhu were completely realized in the established philosophical principles of *jīva-tattva*, *kṛṣṇa-tattva*, *rasa-tattva*, and the other *tattvas*. Yet, to instruct society, they displayed a certain sense of unawareness of these *tattvas* during a certain period of their lives. Similarly, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, an eternally liberated associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, also enacted such a pastime to instruct the readers of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* on proper surrender. By such a pastime he made it known that only the surrendered souls can avail themselves of the purports of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. In regard to this pastime, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written the following words in his autobiography:

"After reading *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* for the first time, some faith for Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu awakened in my heart. By reading *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* for the second time, I realized that there was no scholar like Caitanya Mahāprabhu. I then had the doubt that despite being such an unprecedented scholar, who experienced such unequalled moods of *prema*, why has Caitanya Mahāprabhu told everyone to engage in the one-pointed worship of Śrī Kṛṣṇa? Greatly surprised, I deeply thought about this.

I then sincerely beseeched the Lord and said, 'Prabhu! Please make me understand the deep moods of this pastime.'

Bhagavān's mercy is limitless. Seeing how restless I was in trying to understand these *tattvas*, He responded to my simple-hearted prayers. He bestowed His mercy upon me by giving me 'buddhi-yoga.' I then realized how deep *kṛṣṇa-tattva* is. Indeed, it is the last limit of Godhood. Since then, I started worshiping Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as the Supreme Lord Himself. I then greatly endeavored to understand *vaiṣṇava-dharma* by being in the association of Vaiṣṇava scholars who constantly immersed themselves in *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*. The seed of *vaiṣṇava-dharma* that was sown in my heart during my childhood sprouted at the appropriate time. I then only liked reading scriptures that embodied *kṛṣṇa-tattva*.

I published the *Caitanya-gīta* (which I had compiled earlier) and the *Caitanya-caritra*. On the *Caitanya-gīta*, I mentioned 'Saccidānanda Premāñkara' as my name."

Through this pastime, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has shown how he completely offered himself to the Lord. By hearing the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* from the Vaiṣṇavas in a mood of self-

submission and unconditional surrender, the actual purport of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* will manifest in the heart. As a result, realized knowledge of the *svarūpa* of the original Bhagavān Śrī Caitanyadeva will reveal itself there. By Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura introducing himself as Saccidānanda Premāñkara, we are directed towards his knowledge of the worshipable Deity (*viśaya-saccidānanda*) and the abode of devotion (*āśraya-premāñkara*).

EFFORTS BY THE BRAHMA-SAMĀJA AND THE HINDU SOCIETY TO MAKE ŚRĪ KEDĀRANĀTHA ONE OF THEIR OWN

During the time Kedāranātha was residing in Dinājpura, a tumultuous philosophical quarrel was taking place between the Hindus and the Brahma-dharmāvalambhīs (those who follow Brahma-dharma). The members of both the groups wanted to make Śrī Kedāranātha, a highly respected member of society, join them.

They thought, "If Kedāranātha joins us, the prestige of the other warring group will greatly be hurt." Therefore, the members of both the groups approached him during separate occasions. Kedāranātha, the eternally liberated associate of Śrīman Caitanya Mahāprabhu, told both the parties, "I am not Brahma, neither am I an atheistic Hindu. I only desire to be the foot dust of the servant of the servant of the servant of Śrī Caitanyadeva."

Upon listening to these words, the members of the Brahma-samāja eternally abandoned their desire to make Kedāranātha one of their own. But the Hindus arranged for an assembly where Kedāranātha was greatly praised. The first day of the meeting was held in Khajāñcī Bābū's home. In this meeting, Kedāranātha delivered a discourse that was in relation to the *dharma* of every

living entity. During the discourse, Kedāranātha didn't take the side of either the Brahma-dharmāvalambhīs or the atheistic Hindus. Kedāranātha wanted the Indians and foreigners to understand and imbibe *bhāgavata-dharma* in their lives. Therefore, he delivered an elaborate speech called the, "Bhāgavata Speech." This essay was later published as a separate book. Some Westerners also exhibited much happiness upon listening to Kedāranātha's speech.

MANOHARA SĀHĪ KĪRTANA AND ŚRĪ KEDĀRANĀTHA

Śrī Kedāranātha had heard the Manohara Sāhī *kīrtana* during his stay in Dīnājpura. The songs written by the devotees who have an insatiable thirst to perform *bhajana* under the guidance of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī produced great longing in the heart of Kedāranātha. Kedāranātha's heart had always been longing for the service of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Despite having great respect for Manohara Sāhī *kīrtana* and the songs written by Caṇḍīdāsa, Vidyāpati, and Jayadeva, unqualified people would think of these devotion filled songs as ordinary mundane poetry, and therefore the desire for sense enjoyment, filling one's belly, and fulfilling other inappropriate wants was always appearing in their hearts. Śrī Kedāranātha has written the following words in *Sajjana Toṣaṇī* in this regard: "The unrestricted *śravaṇa-kīrtana* of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda's *śrīgāra-līlā* is an act of Kālī."

TRAVELING TO PURUṢOTTAMA-DHĀMA WITH THE ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM AND THE CAITANYA- CARITĀMRITA IN HAND

Śrī Kedāranātha traveled to Campāranya from Dīnājpura, and from there he went to Śrī Puruṣottama Jagannātha Puri-dhāma. Before

traveling to Puruṣottama-dhāma, Kedāraṇātha went to Kolkata to procure the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Then, he decided to go to Jagannātha Purī after obtaining the books. He traveled to Ulubede by ship and continued on a palanquin to Medinīpura. On the way, he stopped for a night each at Bhadrak, Bāleśvara, and Cuttack. Śrī Kedāraṇātha would become inconceivably happy by having the *darśana* of Śrī Jagannathadeva in the Śrī Mandira.

THE CONDITION OF ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA THĀKURA WHILE HAVING THE DARŚANA OF ŚRĪ JAGANNĀTHADEVA

Following the moods of separation that Śrī Gaurasundara experienced, Kedāraṇātha would have *darśana* of Jagannātha like Śrī Gaurasundara did. He has given a short description of the moods he experienced while having such an audience with the Lord in his autobiography:

"I would have the *darśana* of Śrī Jagannātha-deva everyday in the temple. While having *darśana* of the Lord, I would become greatly happy when the moods of Mahāprabhu would manifest in my heart."

Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura has described the first, second, and third *darśanas* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura in regard to his proclamation of *sambandha*, *abhidyea*, and *prayojana-tattva*. To shed further light on the Thākura's realizations, Śrīla Prabhupāda penned invaluable essays that were published in editions 40, 43, and 44 of the *Gaudīya* magazine. Some portions of those essays are being published here for the happiness of those who wish to dive deep into the ocean of Śrīla

Bhaktivinoda Thākura's divine life. Some portions of the first *darśana* have already been presented for the reader. Now, the remaining portions of the first *darśana*, and the essence of the second and third *darśana* is being presented to the reader.

The Lord of the universe is present everywhere in His creation. Jagannātha is the root of this material world that is always subject to transformation. A devout worshiper of His can attain His grace regardless of where he is staying. But, the desire for sense enjoyment creates obstacles in attaining Him. The entire world is the property of Jagannātha, but the residents of this world are cheated of His presence because of only being externally situated in His creation. Hence, they have forgotten Him completely. By observing the various energies and powerful activities of this material creation, they consider *śaktimaya-tattva* (the Lord's potency) to have been the instrumental cause of this creation at one point of time. According to their thought, this instrumental cause is to be known from its imperceptible, impersonal state.

The inherent characteristics of this world (which are subject to transformation) constitute this earthly sphere. Therefore, the word "Jagannātha" can never be used to address this creation that is always prone to transformation. Lord Jagannātha is the primordial Lord who is situated in His eternal existence. Before having true *darśana* of Jagannātha, the residents of this world see within their hearts His effulgence (*nirviśesa-brahma*), in other words, they perceive Jagannātha as Brahma. Seeing the world through the process of negation, they think all variety to be material, and therefore they adopt mundane intelligence. Thus, they consider the personal form of the Lord to be material, like the gross body. Some consider Kāla (time) to be Jagannātha.

Those bound by impersonal conceptions see Jagannātha as time and space, and therefore consider the material creation to be an eternal principle. Time, place, and circumstance, which is subordinate to the material energy is known as 'jagat', or this world. Therefore, by deliberation they consider the impersonal conception to be the basis of the unmanifest world 'a-jagat' and the imperceptible material energy 'a-vyakta', from which both the material world and material energy (*prākṛti*) have manifest.

It was at the time, while living in Kolkata, that the young Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura became well conversant with all Western philosophical scriptures. His opinions naturally differed with the conceptions of Christianity and the monistic line of thought of Brahmanvāda. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura learned to respect both these lines of thought for their acknowledgement of the Supreme Lord, but he was not ready to accept their mutual opposing attitudes and their fickle worldly logic.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had a natural dislike for the slight trace of impersonality found in Christianity in regards to understanding the subtlety of the Lord's divine form. Furthermore, seeing that the terms in *brahma-vāda* like *brahma-kṛpā* (mercy of the unperceived) and *brahmācaraṇānuśilana* (to follow the impersonal absolute) were only fickle word jugglery that were a nuisance, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura came before the Lord in person, Śrī Nilācala-nātha Jagannātha. Seeing Jagannātha's somewhat hidden legs and partially grown hands increased his longing to always have *darśana* of the eternal form of the Lord. He realized that Jagannātha concealed His legs and only partially showed His arms to those who saw Him as Brahma, because they were

coming to Him or His *saviśeṣa* (personal form) with the desire to see Brahma in a tangible form, head to toe.

One day, Lakṣmaṇa Deśika (Śrī Rāmānujācārya) himself came to Nīlācala to cast all impersonal conceptions of Jagannātha away. Many years before him, Śrī Viṣṇusvāmī drove the inertia and material conceptions of the mundane speculationists away, and made Jagannātha a resident of Sundarācala (the Guṇḍīcā temple). To manifest the real meaning, 'behind the curtain' of the '*apāṇipādah*' *śruti-mantra*, Nīlācalapati Jagannātha rode on the chariot and arrived in Sundarācala.

The three *śaktis* (potencies) of Bhagavān are known as Śrī, Bhū, and Līlā. By the combined help of Līlā and the embodiment of *prema-bhakti* Bhū-śakti, Jagannātha appears on the physical plane. The Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas'* services and beckoning are also instrumental in making the Lord appear. Śrī Gaurasundara's heart transcended the limitations of the material world. Thus, He carried Jagannātha on the chariot of His heart from Nīlācala to Sundarācala. The moods that swelled in Mahāprabhu's heart after He had His first *darśana* of Jagannātha also manifested in Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's heart when he had his first *darśana* of Jagannātha. But he waited for two-three years before penning these realizations in his autobiography. Some of the readers may have heard of the Bengali book, "Śrī Caitanya-gīta." The author of this scripture is famous by the name "Saccidānanda Premāṅkara." According to the servants of the Saccidānanda Temple, this personality (Saccidānanda Premāṅkara) was also known as Mukunda-preṣṭha.

THE SECOND DARŚANA

In approximately 1868, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura made arrangements to travel to Nilācala via Kolkata, Medinīpura, Lakṣmananātha, and Cuttack. Unlike his first visit (when he traveled by foot), Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura traveled in a palanquin to reach Nilācala. But he didn't travel alone this time. His wife, two sons, and two daughters were also with him. His execution of his worldly duties were only a pretext to serve Lord Jagannātha.

During his first *darśana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura stayed in Nilācala for a little time. Nilācalanātha especially accepted Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's service when he came for His *darśana* the second time. A person absorbed in worldly knowledge will try to comprehend the actions of a *mahāpuruṣa* (transcendental personality) according to his capacity. As a result, he will accept the *mahāpuruṣa* as a qualified personality who carries out his actions like how a moralist does. But he is cheated of having eyes that enable him to see how such a *mahā-puruṣa* is a *harijana* (devotee of Śrī Hari), completely transcendental to this mundane creation. Lack of inner insight is the cause of such misfortune. During this time, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura identified himself as "Saccidānanda dāsa." During his second visit to Nilācala, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura not only had *darśana* of Śrī Jagannātha-deva, but he also had Jagannātha's *sevā-adhikāra* (the qualification to serve) for a period of five years. He could thus serve the Lord by his body, mind, and words. Although Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura seemed to be a government official from an external perspective, he didn't accept his wages (for his service in the Jagannātha Temple) like how an ordinary government official would.

By their natural services, the eternal servants of Śrī Hari, the Vaiṣṇavas, are more superior than the demigods who carry out their services according to their qualification. Although Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had obtained an administrative post, he never became negligent in his spiritual enquiries. The services he rendered unto Jagannātha for a period that extended for more than five years are too voluminous to be mentioned here. Still, some of those services will be stated.

A resident of Kolkata called Pratāpcandra Rāya (who published the *Mahābhārata*) had taken the responsibility to send the belongings of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura from Kolkata. After a long search, Pratāpcandra Mahāśaya found and sent a copy of Śrī *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* made from *banyan* leaves. However, it was full of typographical mistakes. Previously, Saccidānanda dāsa (Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura) could not procure a copy of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* even after continuously searching for it. The handwritten scripts were not copied by the negligent descendants of those families that possessed those scripts. There were also those who considered *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* to be a mere Bengali book. Considering this timeless, invaluable scripture as such, they would only busy themselves in trying to read Sanskrit poetry and literature. Therefore, they were also cheated of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*'s inconceivable glories.

When the discussion of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* was brought up to a well-known, prestigious devotee of Bengal, he replied, "Śrī Caitanyadeva is the younger brother of Nityānanda. *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* is divided into four divisions—*Sūtra-khaṇḍa* (the essence of the scripture), *Bālyā-khaṇḍa* (the Lord's childhood pastimes), *Gṛhastha-khaṇḍa* (the Lord's pastimes as a householder),

and *Sannyāsa-khaṇḍa* (the Lord's pastimes as a renunciant)." Furthermore he said, "Still, I have only heard of this book; I have never seen it with my own eyes."

While continually worshiping and serving Lord Jagannātha, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura also started to discuss the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with a scholar called Gopīnātha Miśra (who was a resident of Odisha). By the help of Gopīnātha Miśra, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was granted permission to peruse the library of the King of Odisha. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura studied all the books of the library. He made a copy of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's *Śat-sandarbhas*. He also made copies of Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Prabhu's *Govinda-bhāṣya* (a commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtra*), *Prameya-ratnāvalī*, and the rest of his books. During this time, the father of Rāya Harivallabha Bāsu Bāhūdar, Bindumādhava Bāsu, and his brother, Rādhā-Mohana Bāsu, met with Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and discussed the glories of residing in Jagannātha Puri. They had many friendly, spiritual discussions.

It was during this time that Saccidānanda dāsa obtained a copy of Śrīla Narahari Cakravartī Ṭhākura's *Bhakti-ratnākara* from Rādhā-Mohana Bāsu. It was on the basis of this book that Saccidānanda dāsa had a desire to manifest the birthplace of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in Navadvīpa-Māyāpura-dhāma. And he did manifest Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's birthplace twenty-five years later. A book written by Śrī Paramānanda dāsa also greatly aided Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa in determining the location of Navadvīpa-dhāma and its various pastime places.

He has given an indication of this in his foreword to *Navadvīpa-dhāma Māhātmya*. After becoming conversant with

the various pastime places of Navadvīpa-dhāma, Saccidānanda dāsa returned the book to Rādhā-Mohana Bāsu's son Śrī Balarāma Bāsu, who was a resident of Vṛndāvana's Kalā-kuñja. Many sections of the *Bhakti-ratnakara* book were published in a periodical called 'Prajābandhu' that was published in Candanā-nagara. These sections were published fifty years before. The book was again published in Berhampura.

Saccidānanda dāsa did not only listen to classes on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the *Śat-sandarbhas*, *Govinda-bhāṣya*, and other scriptures that were being spoken in Puri, but also taught all these scriptures himself to the many residents of the city. Next to studying and teaching the *bhakti-śāstras* (scriptures delineating devotion), he established the Bhakti-maṇḍapa [inside the Jagannātha temple] as an extention of the Mukti-maṇḍapa. The Mukti-maṇḍapa, which is the place where the *brāhmaṇas* assemble and discuss *nirviśeṣa-vāda* (impersonal liberation), is situated in the southern part of the temple. The Bhakti-maṇḍapa extended from the Mukti-maṇḍapa upto the area where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's footprints are established. Mahāprabhu's footprints are located in the northern direction of the Mukti-maṇḍapa.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's heart would melt upon seeing the unfortunate condition of the society of Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas. As a result of his heartfelt blessings, the seed of the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas, which was sown in fertile ground, has sprouted and grown into a giant tree that has many branches and sub-branches.

But thorns have again manifested in the Bhakti-maṇḍapa. As a result, the soft feet of those traversing the path of *śuddha-bhakti* have been pricked and blood flows from their wounds.

Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatīpāda, a dear *sannyāsī* associate of Mahāprabhu, has spoken the following words:

kālah kalir balina indriya-vairivargāḥ
śrī bhakti-mārga iha kaṇṭaka-koti-ruddhaḥ
hā hā kva yāmi vikalāḥ kimahāṁ karomi
caitanyacandra yadi nādya kṛpāṁ karosi
Śrī Caitanya-candrāṁṛta 125

"Now it is the age of Kali. My enemies, the senses, are very strong. The beautiful path of *bhakti* is spiked with countless thorns (like *karma*, *jñāna*, and unrestricted sense enjoyment). My spirit is weak. My senses are powerful and agitated. O what shall I do? Where shall I go? O Lord Caitanya-candra, if you do not grant me Your mercy, what shall I do to save myself?"

This *śloka* states that even if the seed of *bhakti* that has been planted in the field of the heart, becomes covered by many thorns, the flood of pure *prema* will smash and wash these thorns away. The *prema* of the creeper of *bhakti* (*bhakti-laṭā*) will not only fill the skies of Odisha with its fragrance—it will distribute the fragrance of *gaura-prema* all over the world.

During this time, Śrīla Svarūpa dāsa Bābājī, Kānthādhari Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī, and some other Vaiṣṇavas of Puri-dhāma helped Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura manifest the pure line of pure *bhajana*. Their discussions, behaviour, and activities in this regard cannot be told here because of lack of space.

Being far-sighted, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura increased the standard of the many services of the temple. Meanwhile, an impersonalist known as 'Jagatguru' Ācārya Yativar, a member of

the Sāradā Matha, made a request to place a stone statue of a dog near Lord Jagannātha. He also requested Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura for his help. But, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura never consented to such ridiculous modern ideas.

Among the many heads of the temples of Rāmānujācārya, the head in-charge of the Śrī Rāghava dāsa Matha, Śrī Nārāyaṇa dāsa, acted as a true friend to Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. During this time, so many scriptures and devotional books written by worldly persons were being studied in the Śrī *saṃpradāya*, that the subject of one-pointedness in *bhāgavata-sevā* had become lost. This was felt by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda.

Another topic of concern, was that the history and actions of the Atibādī *saṃpradāya* greatly differed from the teachings of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Because of his superintendence in many services rendered to Śrī Jagannātha, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura would stay in the temple beyond his working hours. After Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's second *darśana*, not only did *sambandha-jñāna* (knowledge of one's relationship with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His creation) manifest in his heart, he was also blessed with *abhidheya* (the rendering of service).

Śrī Kṛṣṇa-saṃhitā, Śrī Tattva-sūtra, Vedāntādhikaraṇa-mālā, Govinda-bhāṣya-vivṛtti, Kalyāṇa-kalpataru, and the other books written by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, stand eternally as a pillar of *abhidheya* in the fort of Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa's propagation of pure *bhakti*.

THE THIRD DARŚANA

On the pretext of working as a government official, Saccidānanda dāsa spent twenty years working in different places. Yet, his government

services only served to conceal his devotional services. At the start of the nineteenth century, Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa was occupied in fulfilling the inner desires of Lord Jagannātha (*prayojana*).

This was the last time that Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa served Jagannātha during his manifest stay. This time, he traveled to Nīlācala in a vehicle. He then built a *bhajana-kutīra* (cottage meant for *bhajana*) on the golden sand of the ocean shore. He spent the remainder of his manifest stay while being deeply absorbed in the *prema-sevā* that Śrī Caitanyadeva preached, who is an incarnation of *prayojana*, that is, of meeting and separation in love of God.

A devotee should engage in Jagannātha's *sevā* while following the moods delineated in this *śloka*:

premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena
santah sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti
yam śyāmasundaram acintya-guṇa-svarūpaṁ
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam aham bhajāmi

Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā 5.38

I worship the primeval Lord, Govinda, who is always seen by the devotees whose eyes are anointed with the pulp of love. He is seen in His eternal form of Śyāmasundara situated within the heart of the devotee.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura traveled to Nīlācala for the third time to teach all how to embody the words of this *śloka*. Those who aim at relishing the sublime teachings of Śrīla Jagadānanda Paṇḍita's *Prema-vivarta*, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī's *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Bhajana-rahasya*, following in the footsteps of Śrī Gaurasundara, the

embodiment of separation, who led an ideal life of *bhajana* in perfection, will be able to really reap the benefit of this subject matter.

Desiring to secure the well-being of this world, he showed how necessary the *sādhana* of *śravaṇa-kīrtana* is for the *sādhaka*. The means of performing *sādhana* (*abhideya*) was especially highlighted in his second visit to *Nilācala*. We will conclude this essay by only highlighting the specialties of Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa's third visit in comparison to his second visit to *Nilācala*.

Through external limbs of *bhajana*, like religious ceremonies, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura engaged all in performing *kīrtana*. For their eternal benefit he set the example of giving up external displays of Vaiṣṇavism, and showed how associating with the general populace is improper.

The *Sajjana Toṣaṇi* magazine only contains instructions on how to do non-duplicitous *bhajana*. Even though the content appears sometimes in various guise, many instructions on how to properly be engaged in practicing *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* can be collected from this acme of spiritual literature.

Śrī Saccidānanda exposed many persons illicit practices such as enjoying worldly sense objects on the pretext of performing *arcana*; (worship); engaging in hypocrisy on the pretext of performing *kīrtana*; engaging in business while staying in the places of pilgrimage; filling the belly by giving discourses and performing *kīrtana*; and enjoying the dancing and singing of women. By his transcendental character he exposed millions of deceitful, unscrupulous, so-called spiritualists and made them an object of despise in the eyes of the public. There is no limit to how many such perpetrators he exposed.

The hypocritical members of society go to great lengths to disparage the devotees in many ways, but the ideal set by Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa serves as a shining example of unprecedented tolerance. To increase the glories of His devotee, the Lord manifested many potencies during the time of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and still continues to do so to this day. Upon deliberation of this subject, a person's misdirected efforts will cease. And then, inconceivable auspiciousness will present itself before the same person. Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa's unequalled compassion manifested before the eyes of many hostile people. By deeply reflecting on his compassion, everyone can imbibe the quality of true tolerance. Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa's life was an example of extraordinary forgiveness.

The extremely tolerant devotees of the Lord tolerate all the atrocities committed against them with a smile on their faces. Yet, the punishment meted out by the Lord of their lives towards the perpetrators of such animosity is inevitable. Those who display monkey-like renunciation are unable to understand the true meaning of renunciation. They only accept the external meaning of words and remain confined to enjoying sense objects. Therefore, they are unable to understand the practices of the devotees. The plight of such false renunciants has been portrayed by the *mahā-puruṣas* (of whom Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is one), who are transcendental personalities.

The eternal differences and specialties that exist between external practices (which are bound by mistakes and resultant corrections) and internal perfection cannot be understood by the general public, which only relies on an insubstantial perspective. Conversely, only the intelligent and essence-seeking devotee can

understand these differences and specialties. Such a person can also make others understand these specialties.

*kṣāntir avyārtha-kālatvam
viraktir māna-śūnyatā
āśā-bandhah samutkaṇṭhā
nāma-gāne sadā ruciḥ
āsaktis tad-guṇākhyāne
prītis tad-vasati-sthale
ity ādayo 'nubhāvāḥ
syur jāta-bhāvāñkure Jane*

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.3.25-26

When the seed of ecstatic emotion for Kṛṣṇa fructifies, the following nine symptoms manifest in one's behavior: forgiveness, concern that time should not be wasted, detachment, absence of false prestige, hope, eagerness, a taste for chanting the holy name of the Lord, attachment to descriptions of the transcendental qualities of the Lord, and affection for those places where the Lord resides—that is, a temple or a holy place like Vṛndāvana. These are all called *anubhāva*, subordinate signs of ecstatic emotion. They are visible in a person in whose heart the seed of love of God has begun to fructify.

It is not in the good fortune of ordinary people to understand and establish as their goal these moods of *bhāva*—*ksānti* (forgiveness), *avyārtha-kālatva* (concern that time should not be wasted), *virakti* (detachment), *māna-śūnyatā* (absence of false ego), *āśā-bandhah* (hope), *samutkaṇṭhā* (eagerness), *nāma-gāne* *sadā-ruciḥ*

(a taste for continuously chanting the Lord's names), *āsaktiṣ-tad-guṇākhyāne* (attachment to descriptions of the transcendental qualities of the Lord), *prītiṣ tad-vasati-sthale* (attachment to the abode and pastime-places of the Lord), and *ātma-nikṣepa* (full self-surrender).

ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA—DEPUTY MAGISTRATE OF PURĪ AND BIŞKİŞAÑA

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura became the Deputy Magistrate of Puri in the Year 1871. In some speculative books of the Atibādīs, it was stated that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu would again manifest in Odisha. Therefore, some people with ill-intentions started addressing themselves as 'Kṛṣṇa,' 'Balarāma,' 'Caitanya,' 'Brahma,' etc.'

A person called Bişkişāṇa started addressing himself as Mahā-Viṣṇu. He had accrued some mystic powers that aided him in this cause. This person had taken up residence in a forest near Sardaīpūra, an area adjoining Bhuvaneśvara. His followers had established a temple in this area. Bişkişāṇa made the following announcement in various areas of Odisha:

"Mahā-Viṣṇu Bişkişāṇa has concealed his divinity for now. But war will take place in the month of Caitra (March). During this time, Bişkişāṇa will show his four-handed form as Mahā-Viṣṇu."

Bişkişāṇa also spoke the following words:

"I have appeared in this age of Kali to establish *dharma* again. I am Mahā-Viṣṇu, I was sleeping without any anxieties on the milk ocean. But the atrocities of the British have made me restless. They have broken my sleep in the age of

Svāyambhuva Manu and have forced me to incarnate in this world. I will free India by destroying the British. A war will take place on the fourteenth day of Caitra. I will show my four-handed form during this time."

When these words of Biskiṣaṇa were propagated from village to village, many villagers joined his group and increased his number of followers. Even ladies from *brāhmaṇa* families started arriving in the forest to serve the modern day incarnation.

Everyone became greatly bewildered by Biskiṣaṇa's supposed astonishing qualities. His stout body, effulgent eyes, matted locks, sitting postures, and yogic displays attracted the attention of many. Children, women, and the elderly flocked in groups to seek the shelter of his feet.

"Biskiṣaṇa is a perfected *yogī*, he is an incarnation of God," these words were spoken in a hidden manner in every street, home, marketplace, and bathing place. Those who couldn't conceive children were given medicine by him. He would give medicines for various diseases. It seemed that everyone's desires were being fulfilled. People flocked from all four directions and poured onto the streets of Bhuvaneśvara to head to the forest.

The 'hidden incarnation' then sent a message to all young women in regard to the forthcoming full-moon day (Pūrṇimā). The message read, "I will manifest the Rāsa Dance on the night of Pūrṇimā. Anyone who desires to be a part of this *rāsa-maṇḍala* may take part."

Upon receiving this message, the ladies of many villages readied themselves to meet Biskiṣaṇa. When this message reached the ears of women from towns and cities, they started to joyfully

dance in their very homes. Young and old women started to travel to dance with the 'hidden incarnation'.

This news naturally reached the ears of the guardians and husbands of all the women. Until now, no one felt the slightest need to oppose the 'hidden incarnation.' Therefore, many strengthened the resolve of the 'hidden incarnation.' But seeing the poisonous, far-reaching effects of his malevolent intentions entering their homes, they became very restless and anxious. Although the husbands and guardians of many women stopped them from going—their words were not heeded. Who was capable of stopping this forceful current?

Many women thought, "We are going to dance with the 'hidden incarnation' in his *rāsa-maṇḍala*. Why should obstacles be presented in such an auspicious undertaking?" Just as the current of a river flowing downstream cannot be checked, and just as moths cannot be stopped from entering into the fire—similarly, the women could not be stopped. Sensing no recourse, men started following their wives with sticks in hand. All the men then collectively gathered together in Bhuvaneśvara and opposed their wives. Some women were chastised, some were criticized, and some were slapped. In this way, they were made to return to their homes. These 'pastimes' manifested during that day of Pūrṇimā, so the 'hidden incarnation's' *rāsa-līlā* didn't take place. But no one had the courage to relay this outcome to Biṣkīṣāṇa.

Biṣkīṣāṇa started causing much disturbance in Bṛṅgārapura. In response, many men of Odisha filed an application against him and submitted it to Odisha's commissioner, Ravens Sāheb. The application read:

"We are law-abiding citizens. We were living peacefully with our wives and children. But the trouble caused by the upstart Biṣkīṣāṇa, who calls himself a modern-day incarnation, has broken the bonds of our families.

"One day, he tried attracting our wives and daughters on the pretext of performing the Rāsa Dance with them. He is currently proceeding from the southern direction where the Bhuvaneśvara temple is situated. Along with his fifty-thousand disciples, he intends to overthrow the British government and become the King of India. This is the message he relays to everyone; upon hearing his message, all the residents of Odisha are dancing ecstatically. Our prayer is that you give us permission to uphold the prestige of our lineage."

The commissioner became speechless upon reading the application. He became very astonished to know that such an uprising was happening in broad daylight and he was completely unaware of it. He called his regional officials and tried receiving information about Biṣkīṣāṇa from all of them, but none of them could give him any actual information about him. Without any further delay, he ordered the magistrate of Puri, Uyālṭan Sāheb, to act quickly and resolve the situation.

The magistrate of Puri was well aware of Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa's far-sightedness and expertise in resolving many situations. Therefore, he gave Saccidānanda dāsa the responsibility of curbing the licentious activities of Biṣkīṣāṇa. Arbin Sāheb, the police superintendent of Cuttack, pledged his support to Saccidānanda dāsa. The two of them then decided to pay Biṣkīṣāṇa a visit with twenty-five policemen and two police-inspectors.

The next day, before dusk, Saccidānanda dāsa, Arbin Sāheb, and the police force reached the precincts of Bhuvaneśvara. The *yogī*'s residence was two miles from there. The police force made an outpost near the *yogī*'s residence.

That night, while seated on separate palanquins, Saccidānanda dāsa and Arbin Sāheb proceeded to meet the *yogī*. Earlier, the two police officers and the rest of the police force had disguised themselves as ordinary men, and had proceeded to meet the *yogī*. They all reached the *yogī*'s residence at 11 o'clock at night. Although Arbin Sāheb didn't step out of his palanquin, Saccidānanda dāsa alighted from his and stood in front of the *yogī*. Saccidānanda dāsa saw the flames of a sacrificial fire lighting up all four directions, while the *yogī* stood in its midst. The *yogī* was reciting some prayers with his eyes closed. Some of his disciples were seated beside him, while others sat underneath a tree and spoke amongst themselves.

Saccidānanda dāsa saw an unending stream of people pouring in to see the *yogī*. He saw people everywhere. Some were entering, while others were some were sleeping, while others were idly sitting. Although nothing improper was happening during that time, the forest echoed with the sounds of the chatter and patter of many people. It seemed that many hundreds of people were living in the forest.

Upon seeing Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa, the *yogī* said, "You are a special Bengali administrative official. Why have you come here in the dead of night?"

Saccidānanda dāsa replied, "I have come for your *darśana*."

"Why have you desired my *darśana*?"

"Your name was being propagated everywhere."

"Are you my devotee? Or have you come to gift *bhakti* upon me? I am very happy with you. Will you listen to some instructions?" the *yogī* asked.

"As you wish."

"You must have surely read the *Gītā*. Remember the promise I had previously made?

paritrāṇāya sādhūnāṁ
vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām
dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya
sambhavāmi yuge yuge

Bhagavad-gītā 4.8

In order to deliver the righteous, destroy the wicked, and re-establish religious principles, I advent Myself age after age.

"Therefore, I have descended to this world again. I was soundly sleeping on the Milk Ocean, but Manu broke my sleep and made me descend here. I will destroy the British in some time. I have proclaimed this everywhere." Saying these words Bīskīṣāṇa handed Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa a *tāla* leaf that had the following words inscribed on it:

vaner āche bīskīṣāṇa
guptere āchi nā jāni ān
13 minera ārambhīva rāṇa
caturbhuja hai nāśība mlecchagana

"I, Bīskīṣāṇa, have appeared in the forest, where none know of my divine appearance. A war is about to start, wherein I will assume my four-handed form and destroy the British."

After reading these words, Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa asked, "All right. But what will you achieve by this?"

"I will make India a Hindu nation again. I know that you are a person of good views. You are my devotee and you also have subtle considerations. After reinstating India as a Hindu nation, I will give you the responsibility of governing the province of Odisha," the *yogī* replied.

"If Bhagavān wants something done, then what is impossible?" Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa said.

Elated, the *yogī* said, "Good! Good! It seems you are a very good devotee of mine. I will definitely make you the King of Odisha. You are my devotee; therefore, don't disclose these words to anyone. You should meet me after the war."

In this way, many things were spoken. Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa realized that the *yogī* had understood his intention in meeting him.

In the discussion the *yogī* then asked, "You have come for my *darśana*; but, why have you bought the *mlecchas* with you?"

Saccidānanda dāsa was speechless. He thought, "Is the *yogī* all-knowing? Or did any spy inform him before hand of everything?"

The *yogī* then started speaking many confidential subjects that no one else in this world knew except Saccidānanda dāsa. Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa realized that whatever intentions the *yogī* fostered, he had nonetheless astonishing powers. But he also realized that being a high-ranking government official, he had struck fear in the *yogī*'s heart. Therefore, the *yogī* tried convincing him that he would make him a King.

Saccidānanda dāsa then inquired, "If you are Mahā-Viṣṇu, then why have you left the place where Jagannātha is residing? Why are you staying in this forest?"

The *yogī* replied, "I am Mahā-Viṣṇu. Jagannātha is not God, He is a piece of wood. Caitanyadeva is also my devotee. He was a devotee like you are my devotee."

After hearing the offensive comments that the *yogī* made, Saccidānanda dāsa took it upon himself to bring him to the path of auspiciousness. Speaking sweet words, he told the *yogī*, "It is a great offense to consider the *jīva* to be God. The insignificant *jīva* speaks such words when the time for his punishment in the prison of Māyā-devī has come. Instigated by such wicked intelligence, Rāvaṇa, Hiranyakasipu, and other demons resorted to their demoniac ways. But they were slayed by their own actions."

Meanwhile, in a matter of minutes, Biṣkīṣāṇa cured some diseased people by his mystic power. Saccidānanda dāsa directly witnessed this. However, for one who has had *darśana* of the foot-dust of Mahāprabhu's lotus feet, can the mystic power of a *yogī* cause him to become disturbed even in the slightest?

Saccidānanda dāsa told Biṣkīṣāṇa, "I have seen your astonishing prowess. But the work you are going to undertake is going to require much more power than this."

Biṣkīṣāṇa replied in an agitated manner and said, "I am not counting on being helped by the public. Mahā-Viṣṇu is not a beggar who is in need of humans' help. He is supremely powerful on his own right."

Saccidānanda dāsa then got up and left. The other members of the police force, who had disguised themselves as travelers, also started to leave gradually. Biṣkīṣāṇa then closed his eyes and started offering prayers like how he did before. Saccidānanda dāsa did not sit on the palanquin and the palanquin-bearers started walking alongside him.

After proceeding some distance, Saccidānanda dāsa told a police inspector, "We must have ten police personnel staying in this place until we have accomplished our task. The police personnel should disguise themselves and then stay here."

Another police inspector whispered into Saccidānanda dāsa's ears and said, "Mahāśaya! You have witnessed his powers. He is indeed an incarnation. There is no doubt about this. You should be careful."

Smiling, Saccidānanda dāsa said, "Now let us go. I will consider your advice later."

Saccidānanda dāsa then sat on the palanquin and they all returned to their quarters.

The next day, after having finished his morning duties, Saccidānanda dāsa had some police personnel accompany him with the intention of collecting information about Bīskīṣāṇa from many people. Before the police personnel left their outpost, they dressed themselves as ordinary men.

Firstly, Saccidānanda dāsa left for Khandagiri. There are many caves on Khandagiri's slopes. In those caves, many *sannyāsīs*, *brahmacārīs*, and *yogīs* observe austere vows. Saccidānanda dāsa met with everyone and asked them about Bīskīṣāṇa. Bīskīṣāṇa's name was well-known, there was no one who hadn't heard about him. All of them handed over a *tāla* leaf that Bīskīṣāṇa had given to them.

They then said, "Bīskīṣāṇa sent this letter to us, written on a *tāla* leaf, requesting us to join him. But we don't have any time to spare for such activities. Therefore, we sent him a reply, which read, 'We cannot help you in any way.' Since then, he hasn't sent

us any further messages. We have not even had the opportunity to know about his current situation. We are solitary dwellers."

Saccidānanda dāsa said, "There is no need for any of you to be worried. Now no one will come to disturb you."

Saccidānanda dāsa returned from Khaṇḍagiri and entered the surrounding village. He met the elderly men of every home and inquired about Biskiṣaṇa. After these meetings with the villagers, Saccidānanda dāsa realized that the villagers were not bothered about Biskiṣaṇa's activities.

They thought, "He may do as he wishes. We have no problem. We only desire that his gaze will not fall upon our wives, daughters, and daughter-in-laws."

All the villagers showed Saccidānanda dāsa the *tāla* leaf that Biskiṣaṇa had sent them. They had firm faith that Biskiṣaṇa was a man of great power. Saccidānanda dāsa left to another village. He also heard another message that Biskiṣaṇa had sent to the residents of that village. In this way, Saccidānanda dāsa wandered for five days in many villages and collected all the messages that Biskiṣaṇa had sent to the unsuspecting villagers. He also visited villages that were far from his residence and understood that Biskiṣaṇa's message had also reached their homes. His message had reached all the villages that were under the jurisdiction of Puri, Cuttack, and Yājpura. Biskiṣaṇa's message had reached every village of Odisha. So, Saccidānanda dāsa spent fifteen days inquiring about Biskiṣaṇa.

Saccidānanda dāsa reached the conclusion: "Soon everyone will start believing that Biskiṣaṇa is an incarnation of Mahā-Viṣṇu, who has descended to rescue the Hindu kingdom."

After fifteen days, Saccidānanda dāsa proceeded to Ekāmra-kānana with a hundred policemen, police superintendents, and two police-inspectors. He sent a written order to the Bālihantā police-station, that read, "Thirty policemen had gone to Cuttack with some wealth from Purī. They are going to return today. You must stop them here, don't let them return to Purī. When the necessity arises, they will also be able to help us."

When Saccidānanda dāsa reached Ekāmra-kānana with the police force, Biṣkīṣāṇa had seated himself in the midst of a sacrificial arena. Like before, Biṣkīṣāṇa had his eyes closed while offering many prayers. Hundreds of people were already present in the forest. More than a hundred people were sitting around Biṣkīṣāṇa.

When Saccidānanda dāsa stood in front of Biṣkīṣāṇa, he opened his eyes and saw Saccidānanda dāsa, but he could not close his eyes again when he saw policemen armed with guns, swords, handcuffs, and other disciplinary measures. His gaze was fixed on the policemen. Indeed, he didn't bat an eyelid. The devotees surrounding Biṣkīṣāṇa raised a huge hue and cry out of great fear. Some stood at a distance, while others ran to the surrounding villages, and still some others stood like puppets to witness what would happen. The news that the police had arrived to arrest the 'avatāra' Biṣkīṣāṇa reached the ears of all the villagers.

The fearful didn't step out of their homes. The inquisitive flocked in groups. Some ran from the forest to the surrounding villages, while some ran from the villages to the pathways of the forest. It seemed that a festival was going to take place in the forest.

Biṣkīṣāṇa was left speechless. Every hair on his body stood on end and his perspiration testified to his feelings of fear. After

composing himself, he looked towards Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa and said, "Bābū, what is this?"

Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa replied, "We have come to arrest you. It is the order of the government that you stay in Puri."

Disappointed, Biṣkīṣāṇa said, "I don't believe in what the government has to say. No one has the power to take me from this place to another."

"If you will not willingly leave, then we will force you to leave."

"All right, I shall see what all of you will do about this."

Biṣkīṣāṇa then started shaking his head. Fire started to spark and shower from his matted locks. His red eyes ominously showered blazing sparks in all directions. Everyone stood speechless and motionless. Who could touch Biṣkīṣāṇa? Who would sacrifice their lives? Everyone stood to the side for fear of being burnt. Everyone witnessed his mystic prowess.

The policemen thought, "Kedāraṇātha has himself brought such a disaster upon his head."

Saccidānanda dāsa gravely said, "Biṣkīṣāṇa, stop displaying your yogic feats. You have to go to Puri."

"I will not go, if you have the power, then make me go."

"All right."

Saccidānanda dāsa then told four policemen to bring a bullock cart from the neighboring village and they immediately left to do so.

Saccidānanda dāsa addressed the *yogī*, "Biṣkīṣāṇa, you consider yourself to be God. Your pride is to be brushed aside. The Lord is unhappy by your behavior. You are going to be punished. Therefore, stop this wicked activity."

Angered, Biskiṣaṇa said, "You still haven't understood who I am. You are rejecting my godhood repeatedly, now no one can save you. I can still forgive you now, but I will lose my patience if your insubordination persists. Will you stop or not?"

"I will not agree if you will not agree to my proposal. The Lord is waiting to punish you for your impudence; I am only His medium. You will have to go to Puri. I will no longer listen to your threats."

Speaking these words, Saccidānanda dāsa displayed his unrelenting courage.

Biskiṣaṇa said, "Are you not fearful of my wrath? The three worlds will perish by my wrath. Only owing to my compassionate nature am I restraining my wrath."

Smiling, Saccidānanda dāsa said, "If you so desire, you can display your wrath in Puri. But you will have to go to Puri. See! The bullock cart has arrived. You can sit by your own will, or I will instruct the policemen to escort you and have you forcibly be seated upon it."

Biskiṣaṇa said, "One day, you said that you were my devotee. The Lord has to listen to His devotee. All right, I will go to Puri."

Biskiṣaṇa then sat on the bullock cart. The policemen surrounded the bullock cart as it started to move.

Many people then shouted in unison, "All glories to Biskiṣaṇa! All glories to Mahā-Viṣṇu's incarnation!"

A large crowd started to follow the bullock cart. After instructing the policemen to accompany the bullock cart, Saccidānanda dāsa and Arbin Sāheb reached Puri by traveling on their respective palanquins.

Many people had assembled on the front yard of Puri's courthouse. Some wanted to know about what would happen to Biskiṣaṇa, some wanted to oppose his punishment, while others wanted to see him punished. And some others wanted to see his mystic prowess. In this way, innumerable people waded their way from the ocean bank to the courthouse. Except for the Rathayatrā, a gathering of so many people had never been seen in Odisha. Loud cries were heard everywhere.

One evening, Saccidānanda dāsa came to meet Biskiṣaṇa in the jailhouse. He had heard that since the day that Biskiṣaṇa had left Ekāmra-kānana, he had not even touched a drop of water. He had remained confined to his seat since the day he arrived in prison. He had not even lied down. Closing his eyes, he only seated himself in a yogic posture.

Saccidānanda dāsa inquired, "Biskiṣaṇa, how are you?"

Biskiṣaṇa raised his head and lowered it again.

Saccidānanda dāsa said, "I have heard that you haven't eaten or drank anything? Will you eat something? I myself can give you something, or I can have an exalted *brāhmaṇa* provide you with food. How long will you live without eating anything?"

Biskiṣaṇa replied, "Everything will remain as it is as long as I have not freed myself from you."

"I will make all the arrangements for your food and clean lodging. Why are you unnecessarily undergoing such hardship?" Saccidānanda dāsa asked.

"You are the root of my hardship."

"You should now forsake your unjust vow. Your request will soon be fulfilled. It is not the desire of Bhagavān that you murder

the innocent masses, nor should you cheat the residents of the world. You should realize your insignificance, only then will you not incur Bhagavān's wrath. I have repeatedly told you about your welfare. And I will speak the same words again: 'Live your life peacefully, and do Bhagavān's *bhajana*."

Enraged, Biṣkīṣāṇa replied, "You may do as you please. I am not saying anything now. I will see the extent of your actions. Even if Brahmā, Śiva, and the other gods take your side, you will not be delivered. There is time even now—surrender yourself unto me. Otherwise, no one can save you."

Smiling, Saccidānanda dāsa said, "What can I say? Your wicked intelligence refuses to subside. It seems that even Bhagavān doesn't want to cleanse you."

The day of the verdict arrived. Shackled, Biṣkīṣāṇa appeared before the concerned officials. Many respected residents of Odisha had employed prestigious lawyers to support Biṣkīṣāṇa. On that day, court proceedings did not take place. Some questions were posed by the government's lawyer, and the court duly heard him. Two witnesses testified, and the court was adjourned. The whole day was spent in making the necessary adjustments.

Court proceedings were held a week later. As Saccidānanda dāsa entered the witness box, the guards tried to escort Biṣkīṣāṇa to the prison, but Biṣkīṣāṇa looked at Saccidānanda dāsa and said, "Bābū! You have not agreed even now! You will be destroyed. Go home and see for yourself. Don't awaken my anger any longer."

Saccidānanda dāsa proceeded without answering. Biṣkīṣāṇa was then escorted to his prison. When Saccidānanda dāsa went home, he saw that his daughter was very ill. She could not sit or

stand. She could barely breathe. She would shout and point to the parts of her body that gave her great pain. Cries were heard from every corner of his home. Upon seeing Saccidānanda dāsa, the family members started to cry even more loudly.

Saccidānanda dāsa thought, "Is this the curse of Bīkīṣāṇa? Even if this is his ploy, I will not deviate from the truth. Bhagavān's desire is bound to happen. Our auspiciousness lies in the service of His lotus feet. I don't have any knowledge of what is auspicious or inauspicious."

Saccidānanda dāsa spoke *hari-kathā* and pacified his family. A doctor came to treat his daughter. Surely enough, his daughter recovered after five days. The day of the verdict again appeared. The witnesses were summoned. Lawyers from both the parties held many arguments and counter-arguments. The testimonies of the witnesses were compiled, yet the court proceeding was again adjourned for the next day.

At the end of the court proceeding, Bīkīṣāṇa looked at Saccidānanda dāsa and said ominously, "Have you understood your family's situation? You have still not come to your senses. I have cleansed you again and again, but you still haven't learnt anything. What more should I do? Tomorrow is the last day of my hearing—tomorrow is your last day as well. I will steal all your power tomorrow. You must atone for the sin of neglecting an incarnation. I will see how you will issue your directives tomorrow."

Bīkīṣāṇa was then taken to his cell. Saccidānanda dāsa returned to his home. Upon removing his official dress, he experienced some pain on the right side of his chest. The pain increased as night set in. The pain seemed to not decrease. But Saccidānanda

dāsa realized that this was again the ploy of Bīṣkīṣāṇa. So, he was not disturbed in the least. The one-pointed servant of truth is fearless and unrelenting. Saccidānanda dāsa had accepted the truth. Therefore, he was undisturbed by any worldly discomfort. He would never accept any conditioned soul as Śrī Bhagavān's incarnation.

A person who pollutes his tongue by saying, "Gaurasundara is a *jīva*, who is my devotee, and Jagannātha is a piece of wood," is a grave offender whose so-called might is utterly insignificant. Although he has such degrading ideas, he dares to call himself an incarnation of Bhagavān.

A doctor was called and he administered some medicine for Saccidānanda dāsa's speedy recovery. He also gave some medicine that was to be massaged on Saccidānanda dāsa's chest. A towel soaked in hot water was gently applied on Saccidānanda dāsa's chest and back for the entire duration of the night.

Saccidānanda dāsa thought, "There is no harm even if I am troubled for a couple of days. But tomorrow is the day of the final judgment. If I am absent, Bīṣkīṣāṇa will seek the opportunity to display his prowess. He will pollute the minds of the public and try to fulfill his selfish-interests." Many had heard that Bīṣkīṣāṇa had spoken strong words to Saccidānanda dāsa.

The night was anyhow spent and Saccidānanda dāsa became healthier as the sun arose, but he experienced great pain in his chest as soon as he moved even a little. Therefore, how could he go to the court? Also, his absence would hinder the proceedings. His chest and back was again gently massaged with hot water and the medicine administered. He felt some comfort at ten in the

morning. Although he could not move his hands and legs, he could seat himself in the palanquin. He tied a warm cloth to his chest and back before dressing himself in his official attire. And thus, he reached the courthouse.

The judgment was made, and the signed verdict was sent to the judge's assistant.

There was great commotion in the courthouse. Everyone eagerly thought, "What will happen? What will happen?"

Biṣkīṣāṇa asked Saccidānanda dāsa, "How are you feeling today?"

Saccidānanda dāsa didn't reply to his question. Biṣkīṣāṇa was held guilty in the court. The judge then read his verdict. Saccidānanda dāsa told Biṣkīṣāṇa, "You held a rebellion against the Queen. And you also incited the general masses to act against her regime. Therefore, you are sentenced to eighteen months in prison, where you will commit yourself to hard labor."

Many people cried out, "Injustice! Injustice!"

After the court proceeding, Saccidānanda dāsa returned home. To his surprise, he didn't experience any pain. He also returned home by foot.

Biṣkīṣāṇa was escorted outside while being shackled and handcuffed. Biṣkīṣāṇa had to be dressed as an inmate. His beard, moustache, and matted locks had to be shaved. But there was no one who was courageous enough to touch his matted locks.

Trembling, everyone said, "Whoever will touch Biṣkīṣāṇa's matted locks will be burnt to ashes. Seeing that no one came forward, Puri's Doctor Sāheb proceeded to do what was necessary. In the midst of the courthouse's yard, in the presence of Biṣkīṣāṇa's

followers, Doctor Sāheb had Biṣkīṣaṇa seated, and cut his locks with scissors, which after he was shaved by someone. Everyone stood like inanimate objects and saw what happened to the *yogi*. Biṣkīṣaṇa was also dressed as an inmate at the same spot. He was then sent to his cell like a caged lion.

Thus, the ploy and mystic powers of an imposter (who declared himself to be Bhagavān's incarnation), and the allegiance of his followers, could not even slightly touch Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa, who is an eternally perfected servant of the non-envious *bhāgavata-dharma*. Such are the glories of this eternal associate of Śrī Caitanyaadeva.

Biṣkīṣaṇa refused to take even a drop of water for twenty-one days. And then, he committed suicide in Medinīpura's prison.

There was a person in Yājpura who proclaimed himself to be Brahmā's incarnation. And there was also another person in Khurdā who proclaimed himself to be Baladeva's incarnation. Under the watchful eye of Śrī Saccidānanda dāsa, they were also punished like Biṣkīṣaṇa.

THE BIRTH OF VIMALA-PRASĀDA

On Friday, February 6, 1874, a *mahā-puruṣa* was born in Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's home, which was near the Jagannātha Temple. Located especially within the precincts of Nārāyaṇa-chata, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's home was the abode of an unending stream of *hari-kathā*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura named his child, "Vimalā-prasāda." He named him after Jagannathadeva's *para-śakti*, Śrīmatī Vimalā-devī. In the future, this *mahā-puruṣa* was famously known as Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura Śrīla Prabhupāda.

PREACHING SERVICES

In November of 1877, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura came to Mahiṣā Rekhā (presently situated within the division of Ulubediya). While residing there, he had *darśana* of Thānākula, Āmtā, Śyāmapura, and other places. Thānākula is the appearance place of Śrī Abhirāma Ṭhākura, an associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura went to Bhadrak after two months. There, Śrī Balarāma Bāsu, the son of Rādhā-ramaṇa Bāsu, used to come and reside with Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. In August of 1878, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura left Bhadrak and arrived in Naḍāla. He resided in Naḍāla for three years. It was while residing in Naḍāla that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura authored and published the books *Kṛṣṇa-saṁhitā* and *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*.

Kṛṣṇa-saṁhitā contains an unprecedented explanation of *kṛṣṇa-tattva*, philosophical principles of the Lord's transcendental nature and reality. Many Western scholars praised the contents of the *Kṛṣṇa-saṁhitā*. While residing in Naḍāla, a person called Rāyacaraṇa Ghosa Mahāśaya, who later became Rādhā-ramaṇa-caraṇa dāsa Bābājī, would regularly come with his wide circle of friends to listen to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *hari-kathā*. When Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura told him to learn the *kīrtanas* of *Kalyāṇa-kalpatura*, he duly did so. He memorized many songs of *Kalyāṇa-kalpatura*.

While residing in Jagannātha Purī, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura studied the *Saṭ-sandarbhas*, *Bhakti-rasāmrta-sindhu*, and the *Govinda-bhāṣya*. He paid much attention while studying these scriptures. During this time, he wrote a book called "*Hari-bhakti-kalpalatikā*." He also penned some Sanskrit compositions. He simultaneously wrote a book called, "*Datta-kaustubha*." It was

during this time that he authored many *ślokas* of *Kṛṣṇa-saṁhitā*. Nityānanda dāsa, Paramānanda dāsa, and others also heard the *Bhāgavatam* from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura during this time. A Vaiṣṇava assembly called 'Bhāgavata-samsad' was held in the Jagannātha-vallabha garden, where Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura described the essence of many scriptures.

Mahanta Nārāyaṇa dāsa, the *mahanta* of Uttarapārśva, Harihara dāsa, and other scholars would also attend this assembly. There was a *kāntādhārī* called Śrīmad Raghunātha dāsa of Hāthī-Ākhāḍā who staunchly opposed the assembly presided by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He told many people to not attend the assembly. But he was affected by a fearsome disease within some days.

Lord Jagannātha appeared to him in a dream and said, "You have committed an offense at the lotus feet of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. You will only be cured of this disease when you beg for his forgiveness."

Śrīmad Raghunātha dāsa then conveyed these words to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura through one particular person. When Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura heard these words, he immediately appeared before Raghunātha dāsa, and Raghunātha dāsa fell at his lotus feet and begged forgiveness. He became completely healthy after this incident.

Some *niṣkiṇcana-vaiṣṇavas* (whose only wealth is Kṛṣṇa) were doing *bhajana* in their cottages, which were situated on the Sātāsana road. Mahātmā Śrīla Svarūpa dāsa Bābājī Mahādoya was a perfected soul. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura would always speak on the subject of *dharma* with him.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda would always follow the limbs of *sādhu-saṅga* (associating with the *sādhus*), *bhāgavata-śravaṇa* (listening to the *Bhāgavatam*), and *nāma-saṅkīrtana* (congregational chanting of the Lord's names). He would go to the Jagannātha temple everyday to have the Lord's *darśana*. As soon as he would enter the temple, someone would always offer him the Lord's *dālmā prasāda* (a preparation of *dāl* cooked with vegetables). Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura would not go to the Mukti-maṇḍapa where the *māyāvādī-brāhmaṇas* were present. He would always sit near Laksmī-devī's temple and the shrine where Mahāprabhu's footprints were situated. Many *brāhmaṇas* from the Mukti-maṇḍapa would come and listen to his expositions on many scriptures of *bhakti*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura named this place, 'Bhakti-prāṅgaṇa,' or 'Bhakti-maṇḍapa.'

In 1881, while residing in the Nimu Gosāi alley of Kolkata, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura decided to go to some pilgrimage places during the month of Śrāvaṇa (July-August). He went to Vṛndāvana from Prayāga. Upon reaching Vṛndāvana, Rādhā-ramaṇa Bāsu Mahāśaya took Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to his Kalā-kuṇja, and all the Vaiṣṇavas residing there welcomed him with much love and respect. During this visit, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura made it a point to have the *darśana* of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja in Vṛndāvana. It was during this time that he accepted Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja as his *iṣṭadeva* (worshipable spiritual master). Under Bābājī Mahārāja's guidance, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had *darśana* of Govinda, Gopīnātha, and Madana-Mohana.

When Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura spoke on the subject of the inappropriateness of *bhetā-prathā* (a common practice wherein

Bhagavān's *darśana* is only given to those who give a donation), a discussion took place in Gopīnātha's temple. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura then honored *prasāda* in Rūpa dāsa Bābāji's *kuñja*. There, he received a book called *Daśa-slokī*, that was supposedly written by Nimbāditya. This book was later published in *Sajjana Toṣaṇi*.

During Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's visit to Vṛndāvana, a resident of Śāntipura called Nīlamaṇi Gosvāmī Mahāśaya, was speaking on the *Bhāgavatam*, but Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura didn't go to his recital.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had *darśana* of Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Govardhana. A dacoit in Vraja-maṇḍala called "Kaṇḍāḍ" used to accost devotees and steal their wealth. By the efforts of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Kaṇḍāḍ's nefarious activities came to an end.

It was during this time that Sishir Kumāra Ghoṣa, an employee of Kolkata's daily journal, *Amṛta Bāzār Patrikā*, approached Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and conveyed the happiness he felt upon seeing Śrī *Caitanya-līlā*, a drama directed by Star Theater's Giriścandra Ghoṣa Mahāśaya. He repeatedly requested Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to also see this drama. Giriścandra Ghoṣa also met with Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and repeatedly requested him to see his drama. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura however said, "*Caitanya-līlā* is not preached through the mouths of prostitutes. Such renditions only fulfill the conditioned souls' desire for sense gratification. As a result, society is beset by inauspiciousness." When Giriścandra Ghoṣa then explained how the prostitutes behaved during the enactment of the drama, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura showed the difference between the

ideal set by Śrī Caitanyadeva in regard to *hari-kathā*, spoken and heard by the devotees (who desire their eternal auspiciousness), and the behavior of the *prākṛta-sahajiyās* (who hold mundane conceptions in regard to the Lord's pastimes). He also spoke on the ideal set by Śrī Caitanyadeva in regard to songs sung by women. He described the Lord's reaction in this regard.

Whenever Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura would go from Bārāsāt or Māyāpura to his Bhakti-bhavana in Kolkata, many people from Kolkata, including Dvijendranātha Ṭhākura, the senior members of the Brahma-samāja, Avimukteśvara Singh, Trailokyanātha Sannyāl, the followers of Nava-vidhāna-samāja, and Hātkolā's *mahājana* would come to him and discuss *brahma-tattva*.

On one particular day of 1881, a poet called Dvijendra Bābū brought the young poet Ravindranātha Tāgore to Bhakti-bhavana. He introduced Ravindranātha as "Bhānu Singh" and had Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura listen to him sing. Kuñja dāsa and Advaita dāsa Bābājī would also come to Bhakti-bhavana and sing for Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

Although Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was an old student of Iśvaracandra Vidyāsāgara Mahāśaya, he opposed Iśvaracandra's statement in his book "*Bodhodaya*" which read, "*iśvara nirākāra caitanya-svarūpa*." He voiced his opposition in the direct presence of Iśvaracandra. Vidyāsāgara Mahāśaya then accepted his lack of foresight with simplicity in regard to knowing *iśvara-tattva*.

After having *darśana* of Vṛndāvana, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura went to Mathurā, Lucknow, and Faizābād. The place near Faizābād where Rāmacandra entered His unmanifest pastimes along with all the citizens of Ayodhyā is called "Goptā-ghāṭa."

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura bathed in this holy place and offered many prayers. He also had *darśana* of Śrī Rāmacandra's abode, Śrī Ayodhyā-dhāma. He then had *darśana* of Kāśī before returning to Kolkata.

In 1882, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura inaugurated Bhakti-bhavana on Maniktalā street. He manifested the deity of Kūrmadeva while unearthing the foundation for the house. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructed his son Śrī Vimalā-prasāda (Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura) on Kūrmadeva's worship, and he also tied a strand of Tulasī beads around his neck.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura used to say, "It is inevitable that those whom I nourish and look after will definitely become devotees of Śrī Hari."

In May 1882, he accepted responsibility for the twenty-four Paragaṇā Bārāsat division from its Deputy Magistrate Sāhityak Barikimacandra Chāṭṭopādhyāya Mahāśaya.

Paṇḍita Harprasāda Śāstrī Mahāmahopadhyāya would regularly come to meet Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in Nehāṭī, and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura made him the Honorary Magistrate of Nehāṭī's Municipality Branch. With his betterment in mind, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura helped him in various ways. After some time, Harprasāda Śāstrī was given the position of 'interpreter and translator' in the Bengal government, but he would still come and meet Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in Bhakti-bhavana. He expressed his desire to always be under the guidance of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. It was during this time that Harprasāda Śāstrī started reading Jayānanda's *Caitanya-mārgala*. He started preaching that this book was an authorized edition of Caitanya

Mahāprabhu's pastimes, but Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura didn't support his endeavors.

After some time, Harprasāda Śāstrī became a scholar of Buddhist scriptures and started viewing *vaiṣṇava-dharma* according to the philosophy of Buddhism. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura then completely negated his speculative conceptions.

During this time, a lawyer for the Kolkata High Court, Śrī Śāradācaraṇa Mitra Mahāśaya, brought some Sanskrit literature for Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He also procured Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentaries on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura published a translation of the *Bhagavad-gītā* with a commentary in 1886. A resident of Barhampura, Rāmanārāyaṇa Vidyāratna, desired that Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura accept the services of Trīpureśvara Vīracandra Māṇikya Bāhādura and publish his commentary on the *Bhāgavatam* with some financial help from his side.

In April of 1886, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura visited Śrī Rāmapura. He then visited Vaidyanātha, Bāñkipura, and Gayā in the month of October. He had *darśana* of the stairs that his aged great-grandfather Svanāmadhanya Madan Bābu had built for the forefathers in Gayā. He also had *darśana* of Rāmaśilā and the Brahmayoni hill.

In the month of Vaiśākha (May) of 1881, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura published the first issue of the magazine 'Sajjana Toṣaṇi.' However, in 1883, while living in Bārāsāt, he stopped its publication for some time, after also publishing an English edition. In 1885, a place for spreading Vaiṣṇava literature called 'Vaiṣṇava Depository' was established in Rāmabāgāna's Bhakti-bhavana.

The Vaiṣṇava Depository became a highly esteemed library of its region. During the same year, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had *darśana* of Memāri, Kulīna-grāma, Bandel, Saptagrāma, and other places, together with Vimalā-prasāda and a few others who were under his guidance. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gave many instructions on *nāma-aparādha* (offenses committed to the holy name), *nāma-ābhāsa* (a semblance of the holy name), and *śuddha-nāma* (chanting the pure holy name) in Kulīna-grāma.

The publication of *Sajjana Toṣani* restarted with great effort in 1885. That same year, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gave *harināma* and the *nṛsiṁha-mantra* to Vimalā-prasāda and another young boy of the Gosvāmī family of Rāmapura.

Also in 1885, under the watchful eye of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the Viśva-Vaiṣṇava-Rāja-sabhā was re-established in the Durgā-maṇḍapa of Rāmgopāla Bāsu Mahāśaya. Rāmgopāla Bāsu's residence was situated at the Kṛṣṇa Singh street, which was adjacent to Kolkata's Bekhun road. When this society was relocated to Kāmsāripādā's Sarkāra Lane, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura became the society's chairman. The society's aim was published in the book, "Viśva Vaiṣṇava Kalpāṭavī." Eleven year old Vimalā-prasāda would carry the *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* when Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura would give classes on them at the society.

During this time, the father of Doctor Rāmacandra Datta Mahāśaya, Nṛsiṁha Datta F. C. S, took Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to his home (after duly requesting him) to have the *darśana* of his son's *guru*, Rāmakṛṣṇa Mahāśaya, who was from Dakṣiṇeśvara. On seeing Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Rāmakṛṣṇa Mahāśaya

(while intending to glorify Gaura-Nitāi) started singing, "Jāder hari bolite nayana jhure, tāra dubāya eseche re—just by uttering Hari's name, tears incessantly flow from the eyes of the two brothers."

While singing this *kīrtana*, he displayed many moods of *bhāva*. But upon conversing with Rāmakṛṣṇa Mahāśaya, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura realized that he was an impersonalist, who supported all speculative theories.

"*Prema-bhakti* is far from a place where even a scent of impersonalism is present." Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura corroborated this statement by stating the precedent set by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates. He also published certain portions of the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* in issues 111–113 of *Sajjana Toṣāṇi* in the Baṅgābda Year 1292. In these issues, he spoke on the philosophy of Rāmacandra Datta's *guru*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura never presented *bhāgavata-dharma* and *prema-bhakti* in such a way that it would suit the needs of the ignorant. He again preached the *anyabhilāṣitā-śūnya* verse to the educated society of the 19th century. This verse delineates the essence of the *svarupa-rūpānuga* line of pure devotion.

*anyabhilāṣitā śūnyam jñāna-kārmādy anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanaṁ bhaktir uttamā*

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.11

The performance of activities that are meant solely for the ultimate pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, or in other words the unbroken current of service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, performed through all endeavors of the body, mind, and speech, and through the manifestation of various spiritual sentiments, which is

not covered by knowledge aimed at impersonal liberation and reward-seeking activity, and which is free from of all desires other than the aspiration to bring happiness to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is the highest form of devotional service.

Therefore, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is eternally worshiped as Bhakti-Bhagiratha, he who bought the current of pure *bhakti* again into this world.

In 1886, while Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was residing in Śrī Rāmapura, he authored and published *Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta*. In the same year, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura published the *Bhagavad-gītā* with the commentary of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura. This edition also included his *Rasika-rañjana* commentary. He also wrote a Sanskrit commentary to the *Śikṣāṣṭaka* that was called *Sammodana-bhāṣya*. He then published a book called 'Bhaktivinoda.'

Hārādhana Datta Mahāśaya, a resident of Kayāpāṭa Vadangañja, visited Rāmapura and gave Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura an old copy of the book 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa Vijaya' who then published this book. Haradhana Bābū Caṇḍīdāsa brought many poets (who considered themselves to be great scholars) along with him to meet Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He did so many times, but Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura never accepted the views of such artificial poets.

During this time, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura established a printing press called 'Caitanya-yantra.' Vipina Bihārī Gosvāmī, a resident of Bāghanapāḍā, was made the chairman of this press. Here, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura published two parts of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, which contained his commentary as well as Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's Sanskrit commentary.

Rāmanārāyaṇa Vidyāratna Mahāśaya, a resident of Bah rampura (which lies in the district of Murśidābād) however made a special request to Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He said, "After your edition of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* is published, no one will accept the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* published by Vidyāratna of Bah rampura." Hearing Vidyāratna's request, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura stopped his publication of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

In February of 400 Caitanyābda, year 1886 of the Christian era, the Ṭhākura was decorated with the title "Bhaktivinoda." Śrī Madhusūdana dāsa, a resident of Sambalpur, who was a *sanodiyā-brāhmaṇa*, tried hard to become Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's first initiated *pāñcarātrikī* disciple. He sent an old edition of *Caitanya Upaniṣad* from Sambalpur to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

In 1887, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura authored a Sanskrit scripture called 'Śrī *Caitanya-caraṇamṛtam*' Along with publishing this scripture in the same year (1887), he also published the *Caitanya Upaniṣad*.

It was at this time that Rāmacaraṇa dāsa Bābājī, a disciple of Paṇḍita Gopīlāla Gosvāmī (who was a resident of Vṛndāvana's Rādhā-ramaṇa Ghera) regularly started visiting Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in Śrī Rāma-pura. From time to time he gave many Vaiṣṇava scriptures to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

Whenever Barhampura's Rāmanārāyaṇa Vidyāratna Mahāśaya would visit Kolkata, he would undoubtedly have the *darśana* of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He would then receive many instructions from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in regard to preaching the subjects of Vaiṣṇava scriptures. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura greatly supported and enthused him to perform his services.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura came to Krishnanagar in November of 1887. He started reading Vaiṣṇava scriptures with great attention in Krishnanagar. In this regard, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has authored the following words in his autobiography:

"I have started reading the Vaiṣṇava scriptures with great attention to detail. By associating with certain devotees, feelings of renunciation manifested in my heart. I considered, 'I will make a small residence on the banks of the Yamunā, and do solitary *bhajana* in any part of Mathurā-Vṛndāvana where she flows.' During this time, I was writing the *Āmnāya-sūtra* (condensed aphorisms of the Vedas). I went to Tarakeśvara because of some work.

"During the night, when I was sleeping, Śiva Ṭhākura appeared to me and said, 'You are going to Vṛndāvana, but what have you done about the work that is to be achieved in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, the abode that is next to your home?'"

THE MANIFESTATION OF MĀYĀPURA AND ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA'S PREACHING SERVICES

On Christmas day (25 December) of 1887 (when the holidays had begun), Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura came to Kuliā Navadvīpa. He has written the following words in his autobiography that relate to his stay in Navadvīpa during this time.

"Although I searched everywhere for the Lord's birthplace in Navadvīpa, I could not find it. I was greatly pained at heart because of this. Some of the people here in Navadvīpa only desire to fill their bellies. They don't try in any regard to discover the location of the Lord's birthplace. On one evening,

Kamala (Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's son) and I went to the roof and eagerly glanced in all four directions. It was very dark at ten in the night, and it was cloudy. On the northern direction of the Gaṅgā, I beheld an extraordinary effulgence. "When I asked Kamala if he had also seen this wondrous sight, he replied in the affirmative. I was very surprised by what I saw.

The next morning, I saw the same place from the roof of the Rāṇī Dharmāśalā. There, I saw a *tāla* tree. When I inquired about the place, some people told me, 'This place is called Ballāldhīgī. It still bears the signs of Lakṣmaṇa Sena's fort.'

"I went to Krishnanagar on Monday and then to Ballāldhīgī on a Saturday. On beholding the same wondrous sight on the following night, I went to the selfsame place immediately on the next morning. I then had *darśana* of all the surrounding places by foot. After inquiring from the elderly gentlemen of those places, I realized that the place I had marked was Śrīman Caitanya Mahāprabhu's birthplace. I again saw all the places and villages that were mentioned in Śrī Narahari Ṭhākura's *Parikramā-paddhati*, *Bhakti-ratnākara*, and Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura's *Caitanya-Bhāgavata*.

"After writing *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya* in Krishnanagar, I sent the manuscript for publication in Kolkata. I then explained the landscape and geographical location of Navadvīpa Māyāpura to Krishnanagar's engineer, Dvārakā Bābū. By the strength of his intelligence, he understood everything and he made a map of Navadvīpa-dhāma for me. This map was also published in *Navadvīpa-dhāma-mahatmya*.

"After having *darśana* of all the pastime places of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, and after having writing about its importance and glories, I realized that there was nothing left for me to do."

While residing in Krishnanagar, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura visited his birthplace Ulāgrāma in April. He then gave a discourse on *dharma-tattva* at the local school. When Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura met Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja for a second time in 1887, Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja gave him his Giridhārī-śilā to worship. This Giridhārī-śilā was worshiped in Bhakti-bhavana. In 1888, Śrī Bihārī dāsa Vrajavāsī brought Vaiṣṇava Sārvabhauma Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja to Bhakti-bhavana while carrying him on his head. At that time, for the happiness of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the resident of Bhāgnāpādā, Śrī Vipinabihārī Gosvāmī, honored the water that had bathed the lotus feet of Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja. The photograph of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja that was taken at that time is now worshiped everywhere.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura manifested Surabhi-kuṇja in Godruma in the year 1888, and that same year, he visited the Sub Division of Myemensingh. While traveling to Myemensingh in a steamer, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura spoke *hari-kathā* to Rādhā-vallabha Chaudhary Mahāśaya and his brother (who were landlords of Serpura). He then reached Myemensingh from Nārāyaṇa-gānja.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura then started visiting the different places of "Gora-pāhāḍa" while seated on an elephant. By his mercy, the people of the Hājanga caste were attracted to the lotus feet of Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura next made his auspicious arrival in Dhākā, where he resided in the home of Mahendranātha Mitra Mahāśaya. He spoke *hari-kathā* for two days in Navābpura Vasākdigera's Hari-sabhā. Then, after visiting Nārāyaṇa-gāṇjā and Goyālacanda, he returned to Kolkata. From there, he then went to Tāngāil and arrived in Vardhamāna in September of 1889.

Together with Śrī Vimalā-prasāda, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura visited Śāntipura and Kālnā in March of 1890. This was just after he had established Surabhi-kuṇja—on 16 March 1890, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had arranged for a wonderful festival in Godruma to commemorate the appearance of Surabhi-kuṇja.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura spoke *hari-kathā* in Bhagnapada on 26 March and reached Kālnā on 30 March. He visited the *śrīpat* of Śrī Nakula Brahmacārī (which is situated in Pyāri-gāṇja) on April 9th, went to Kaigrām Maṭha on April 23rd, and on April 25th, he arrived in Dhenuda to have *darśana* of Śrīla Vṛṇḍāvana dāsa Ṭhākura's *śrīpat*. On May 18th, he again visited Godruma, and the next day, on May 19th, he went to the *bhajana-kuṭīra* of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja in Kuliya Navadvīpa. After having Bābājī Mahārāja's *darśana*, both of them spoke *hari-kathā* together. Previously, while residing in Krishnanagar, and with the intention of serving Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had a compound wall built around his place of *bhajana*.

On 18 October, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura spoke *hari-kathā* in Āmlājodā, a place within the district of Vardhamāna. He also spoke *hari-kathā* in Gopālapura (a place within the border of Āmlājodā), Rānīgaṇja, Varākara, and Durgāpura, and arranged for a festival of *saṅkīrtana* to be held in each of these places.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura visited Dinājpura again in 1890. This time, Rāma-sevaka Chatṭopādhyāya Bhakti-bṛṅga Mahāśaya and Śrī Vimala-prasāda were with him. Bhakti-bṛṅga Mahāśaya proceeded to Kolkata to publish Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Prabhu's commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā* and Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's 'Vidvat-rañjana' commentary on the same scripture. Bhakti-bṛṅga Mahāśaya used to always discuss the purports of the scriptures with Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He became the presiding chairman of the Navadvīpa-dhāma Pracāriṇī Sabhā and received the title 'Bhakti-bṛṅga' in this assembly.

PREACHING IN KOLKATA

When the publication of *Sajjana Toṣaṇi* had stopped in 1889–1890, Amṛta Bazaar's Sishir Kumāra Ghoṣa Mahāśaya started the publication of "Viṣṇupriyā Patrikā" as a periodical. At the request of Sishir Bābū, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrī Śyāmalāla Gosvāmī (a scholarly descendant of Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu's family) became co-editors for the periodical. Sishir Kumāra would always visit Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, whom he considered his *guru*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura also had affection for Sishir Kumāra and would treat him as his younger brother. After reading Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's "Bhāgavata Speech" essay, Sishir Kumāra bowed his head and accepted the sublimity of *vaiṣṇava-dharma*. As a result, Sishir Kumāra Bābū would himself proclaim the glories of *vaiṣṇava-dharma*.

Sishir Kumāra Bābū's faith and devotion in Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura can be gauged by reading the following letter that he addressed to the Ṭhākura:

Śrī Gaurāṅga

Deoghar
Via-Baidyanath E-I-Ry
23rd Nov. 1888

Please accept my humble obeisances.

I received the book that you sent. The devotees undergo difficulties for us, and we lowly fallen members of society are able to save our lives by their grace.

Many people unanimously gave you the title 'Bhaktivinoda,' but I consider you to be the 'Seventh Gosvāmī.' During Śrīman Mahāprabhu's manifest presence, there were Six Gosvāmīs. And now you are the Seventh Gosvāmī during Mahāprabhu's unmanifest presence. You are most fortunate and I will also become most fortunate upon receiving your mercy. You have been empowered by the Lord; and during dry times such as these you are reviving *sanātana-dharma*. I haven't read your *Navadvīpa-dhāma Parikramā* book yet, but my limbs have been cooled just by touching your book.

You have established Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, but where is Navadvīpeśvarī? Navadvīpa is empty without Īśvarī (Goddess). Please bring Her here; and make millions and millions of souls (such as me) eternally indebted to you.

Everybody formed a group and hid Navadvīpeśvarī Śrīmatī Viṣṇupriyā-devī. Navadvīpa-candra became sad by this act. He then gave His *darśana* to His dear servant Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, and offered Śrī Gaurāṅga-Viṣṇupriyā Yugala-vigraha to him. You must have read this pastime in *Narottama-vilāsa* and *Bhakti-ratnākara*. This deity is present even now

in Śrī Kheturī-grāma. Only you have been capable enough to carry out the orders of Bhagavān Gaurāṅga. Therefore, I have taken your shelter out of great haste. Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala contains many details in regard to Śrīmatī Viṣṇupriyā-devī. There are some details in *Bhakti-ratnākara* also. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has also written about the Goddess in *Gaurāṅga-Viṣṇupriyā Yugala-dhyāna*. I can also hear about you from many others. What more can I say? Please accept me as your sheltered servant.

Daṇḍavat pranāma,
Śrī Sishir Kumāra Ghoṣa dāsa

After Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura started his preaching, Sishir Kumāra Ghoṣa displayed great enthusiasm in helping Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura fulfil his transcendental engagement. Sishir Bābū heard many instructions from Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura about chanting *harināma*. He then started chanting *harināma* on a *tulasī-mālā*. But he was not ready to accept the rules pertaining to chanting on a *tulasī-mālā* that was situated in a bead bag, nor was he ready to wear a *tulasī-mālā* around his neck, or to accept initiation according to Vaiṣṇava etiquette. Neither was he ready to accept the regulative principles governing the intake of many different foodstuffs. While keeping him in mind, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura composed a *kīrtana*, which was included in *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*. In the *kīrtana*, he specified the necessity of accepting the line of a pure *saṃpradāya* (school of thought) and a channel of proper aural reception (*āmnāya-vāṇī*). Sishir Kumāra would write to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura even when the

Thākura was in Puri. He heard many nectarean instructions from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura about *hari-bhakti*, and the life and precepts of Śrīman Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Sishir Kumāra organized a *saṅkīrtana* group that consisted of all classes of people. But Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura didn't give his consent to such an arrangement. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura never supported the conceptions of *anyābhilāsa* (cultivating desires separate from *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*), Māyāvāda, theosophy, *rūpaka-vāda* (concocting mundane images), *adhyātmika-vāda* (speculating on the soul and the Supersoul), *gaura-nāgarī-vāda* (to consider Mahāprabhu as a hero), and other speculative theories. He also didn't support the idea of performing *nagara-saṅkīrtana* to alleviate the sufferings of society caused by upheavals, plagues, or natural disasters.

After acceding to the continuous requests of Sishir Kumāra, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura spoke on the life of Mahāprabhu and on the teachings of *vaiṣṇava-dharma* at various places in Kolkata. Some of them were the Oriental Seminary, City College, Star-theater, and some ordinary places. When Sishir Kumāra requested Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to arrange for a place in Kolkata where the Vaiṣṇavas could gather, and for the compilation of a dictionary that defined Vaiṣṇava terms—Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura handed this responsibility over to Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda.

UPENDRACANDRA MITRA

During Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's Vidana-garden assembly (held in the month of August), Upendracandra Mitra, a follower of *pañcopāsana* (the worship of five different gods) spoke on the

Bhāgavata. He had started to call himself "Bhakti-tīrtha." Gaṅgā-Nārāyaṇa Mahāpātra, a resident of Sāuḍī village (which was within the district of Medinīpura), had a son called Sītānātha Mahāpātra, who was very proficient in music. He was proud of being a follower of Upendra Bābū. When Sītānātha Mahāpatra was living in the house of his *kula-guru* (who was a descendant of Advaita Ācārya's family), Rajendranātha Mukhopadhyāya introduced Sītānātha Mahāpatra to Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura in the Vidana-garden assembly. Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura then introduced Sītānātha Mahāpatra to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in the Year 1891.

Being a follower of Upendra Bābū, Sītānātha Mahāpātra fostered conceptions of Māyāvāda and *pañcopāsana*. Seeing these inclinations in him, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructed him to read *Kṛṣṇa-saṁhitā*, *Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta*, and *Jaiva-dharma*. By the association of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Śrī Kṣetranātha Sarkāra Bhaktinidhi (a resident of Āmlājodā who was under the guidance of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura), and on being attracted by Śrī Vipinā-bihārī Sarkāra Mahāśaya's title of devotion—Sītānātha Mahāpātra abandoned the association of the Māyāvādīs. He then became greedy for Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's association.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura always considered himself to be a sweeper in the marketplace of the holy name (*nāma-haṭṭa*). Considering himself as such, he preached from village to village.

In August of 1891, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura took Rāma-sevaka Bhakti-bṛṅga, Sītānātha Mahāśaya, and a few others and preached the glories of the holy name in many areas of Medinīpura. He preached in all the areas of Hooghly District (which included Kolkata), and then returned to Godruma's Surabhi-kuṇja. *Nagara-saṅkīrtana* was also held in these areas.

Next, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura spoke in many esteemed assemblies of Krishnanagar. Mr. Monroe Sāheb, Mr. K. G. Gupta, Mr. Weboyales, and Mr. Butler would listen to all of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's speeches.

On one evening in 1891, a resident of Kāgmāri-grāma (which lies in Myemensingh District) called Dr. Śrīyukta Rasika-mohana Cakravartī came to meet Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura at Bhakti-bhavana. He told Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura that Śrīyukta Sishir Bābū had sent him to receive instructions from His Divine Grace. Rasika Bābū introduced himself as a descendant of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's family. During this time, Rasika Bābū had a long beard. Being a descendant of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's, it was appropriate for Rasika Bābū to abandon his guise of a vagabond and have himself tonsured. After all, Mahāprabhu Himself proclaimed cleanliness as being a prerequisite.

After listening to these words of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Rasika Bābū raised a point of contention. He spoke of a certain painting that was exhibited in the Bahu Bazaar Art Studio, which was supported by Sishir Kumāra. The painting of Mahāprabhu and His associates had a picture of Advaita Ācārya with a beard and moustache. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura opposed the production of such a concocted painting, but Rasika Bābū was not happy by the response of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

In the Year 1906, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura spoke on the teachings of Śrī Caitanyadeva in the house of Rāya Yatīndranātha Chaudhary (a landlord of Tākira). After listening to Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's speech, Rasika Bābū shaved his beard and moustache. He then appeared before Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and said, "Your *hari-kathā* embodies the *tattva-siddhānta* (established

philosophical principles) of *vaiṣṇava-dharma*. Your words are non-different from the words of the Gosvāmīs."

VISITING VRAJA-MĀNDALA AND ASSOCIATING WITH VAIṢÑAVA SĀRVABHAUMA

On Wednesday, 9 March 1892, an Ekādaśī day, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura took Rāma-sevaka Chaṭṭopādhyāya Bhakti-bṛīṅga Mahāśaya along with him and started off for Vṛindāvana. On the way, he stayed for a day at the house of Kṣetranātha Sarkāra Mahānidhi, a resident of Āmlājodā. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura honored the entire day of Ekādaśī in the association of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and the devotees remained awake for the entire Ekādaśī night and held a tumultuous *nagara-saṅkīrtana* early in the morning on Dvādaśī (the next day). On the same day, Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja inaugurated a Prappanāśrama.

After proceeding from Āmlājodā, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura spoke *hari-kathā* in Gidhoda, Buxar, and other places. He reached Prayāga on 13 March. Along with having *darśana* of various places, he spoke *hari-kathā* in those selfsame places until 18 March. After visiting Itāvā, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura reached Vṛindāvana on 21 March. After having *darśana* of Baelvana and Bhāṇḍīravana on 23 March, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura proceeded to Māṭavana. He then had *darśana* of Māna-sarovara on 24 March. After visiting various places of Vraja-māṇḍala, he spoke *hari-kathā* in Vṛindāvana on 25 and 26 March. He had *darśana* of Mathurā on 27 March and of Gokula on 28 March. On 29 March, he visited Madhuvana, Tālavana, Kumudavana, Bahulāvana, and

other places. After having *darśana* of Rādhā-kuṇḍa on 30 March, he proceeded to Govardhana, where he stayed for some days. After that, he returned to Vṛndāvana. He reached Āgrā and Kānpura on 10 and 12 April respectively, and Prayāga on 13 April. From there, he proceeded to Kolkata.

While residing in Bhakti-bhavana in Kolkata, he preached the glories of the holy name in many places. He also gave many speeches on pure *bhakti*. Whether Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura stayed in Surabhi-kuṇḍa in Godruma or at Bhakti-bhavana in Kolkata, he would always speak *hari-kathā* in all the surrounding places. Amidst these engagements, he also gave speeches on Mahāprabhu's teachings in Krishnanagar.

In 1893, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura organized a large *hari-saṅkīrtana* festival under the guidance of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. Vaiṣṇava Sārvabhauma Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja arrived in Māyāpura, together with many Vaiṣṇavas, and was instrumental in manifesting Śrīman Mahāprabhu's birthplace there. At that time, Bābājī Mahārāja danced ecstatically along with all the Vaiṣṇavas at Mahāprabhu's divine appearance place.

A person who was a Gosvāmī in name only, and who was proud of being an *ācārya* [Vipina Bihārī Gosvāmī] spoke offensively about Śrīman Mahāprabhu's intimate associate, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. Upon hearing these words, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura became very unhappy. He then authored a *kīrtana* in regard to such offensive words, and warned the Vaiṣṇava world about the dangers of *vaiṣṇava-aparādhā*.

*vaiṣṇava caritra sarvadā pavitra
jei ninde hiṁsā kari
bhaktivinoda nā sambhāṣe tāre
thāke sadā mauna dhari*

Bhaktivinoda always keeps a vow to abstain from speaking any type of envious blasphemy unto such a pure devotee, whose life and characteristics are always pure.

ŚRĪ MĀYĀPURA'S SEVĀ

On 2 April 1893, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura arrived in a place called Sāsārāma, which was within the state of Bihar. After speaking *hari-kathā* on the banks of the Sona river, he continued his preaching in places like Nāsari-gaṇja and Dihiri. At that time, the Hindus and the members of other religions had many differences of opinion regarding their lines of thought. This disparity seemed to breach its limits. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura went to Krishnanagar from there.

On a certain day of January in 1894, a big assembly was arranged in a school of Krishnanagar. All the assembled devotees and guests unanimously agreed that an eternal service should be manifested in Śrīman Mahāprabhu's birthplace. It was during this time that the *Navadvīpa Pracāriṇi Sabhā* was established. Nafaracandra Pāl Chaudary Bhakti-bhūṣāṇa Mahodaya, a landlord of the Nāṭudaha region of Nadia, was chosen as the first chairman of this assembly.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura desired to install a pillar at the birthplace of Mahāprabhu to indicate the place of His appearance, but Nadiyā's District Engineer, Dvārakanātha Sarkāra, and Nadiyā's

landlord, Nafaracandra Pāl Chaudary Bhakti-bhūṣāṇa Mahodaya, desired a temple to be constructed there. Thus, they became the proponents of *nitya-bhāgavata-sevā*. After careful deliberation on the proposal made by Dvārakā Bābū, Nafara Bābū, and the others, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gave his consent. According to their proposal, the land at Mahāprabhu's birthplace would first be leveled and a cottage would be made there.

On Wednesday, 21 March 1894, the Pūrṇimā (full moon day) of the month of Phālgunī (February–March), a lunar eclipse took place. It was on this day that the deities of Śrī Gaura-Viṣṇupriyā-Lakṣmīpriyā were established while thunderous *sarikirtana* was going on. Just like all the auspicious *tithis* (holy time intervals) coincided together at the time of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's appearance, many such *tithis* manifested when Mahāprabhu's birthplace was being re-established. The news of the appearance of Mahāprabhu's birthplace spread in all four directions. Innumerable devotees from all the various places of India then started visiting Māyāpura.

One evening, the mother of Jagabandhu Bhaṭṭācārya, a resident of Faridpura, came to meet Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in Krishnanagar. Despite being repeatedly requested, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura didn't want to meet the lady, as it was not proper etiquette to do so. Disappointed and restless, the lady left. By this incident, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura set the standard for ideal Vaiṣṇava behavior.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura took leave from the government on 4 October 1894. From Krishnanagar he went to Surabhi-kuṇja, where he spent an entire month studying the scriptures and

delivering speeches on them. In an assembly held in Krishnanagar under the chairmanship of Syara K. G. Gupta, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gave some discourses on pure devotion. After that, he departed to Kolkata's Bhakti-bhavana. Along with Rāma-sevaka Bābū, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura started collecting money everyday for the construction of a temple in Śrī Māyāpura's Yogapīṭha.

THE PREACHING OF ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA

On 26 February 1895, the day of Māghī Amāvasyā, Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja manifested his disappearance pastime.

On 7 April of the same year, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's son Acyutānanda, who was formerly a cursed Śrī Rāmānuja Vaiṣṇava, became free of the offenses he had previously committed at the lotus feet of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. He then left his body like a Vaiṣṇava *yogī*.

In July of 1895, Pañcaśrī Mahārāja Viracandra Devavarma Māṇikya Bāhādūra, the King of Tripura (an independent state), repeatedly requested Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to visit his capital, Āgartalā. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura went there, together with Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and the King heard many lectures of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura on *vaiṣṇava-dharma*. One day, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura spoke on the glories of the holy name (*nāma-tattva*) and another day on the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (*caitanya-līlā*).

King Māṇikya Bāhādūra arrived in Kolkata in November of 1895. There, he heard Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speak on the glories of Śrīdhāma Vṛndāvana.

In the months July and August of 1896, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote and published an English book, called '*The Life and Precepts of Mahāprabhu*'. He also published *Śrī Gaurāṅga-smaraṇa-maṅgala-stotra* in Sanskrit. Sitikanṭa Vācaspati wrote a commentary on this book, which was published along with the Sanskrit content. During this time, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura was residing with Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in Kārṣīyaṅge, Bengal.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura tried manifesting Svānanda-sukhada-kuṇja in Godruma in 1898. In October of the same year, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Sarasvatī Ṭhākura traveled for *darśana* to Prayāga, Kāśī, and Gayā, and returned to Kolkata after that.

In 1899, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura built a *bhajana-kuṭīra* at Svānanda-sukhada-kuṇja. He then left Surabhi-kuṇja and started doing *bhajana* in Svānanda-sukhada-kuṇja instead. The crest jewel of *avadhūtas*, Śrīla Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, would come there in the afternoon to listen to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's discourses on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. It was on one of these days that Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura had the great fortune of having *darśana* of Śrīla Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja's lotus feet for the first time.

In March of 1900, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura traveled to Puri, again accompanied by Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. On the way, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura spoke *hari-kathā* in Bāleśvara, had *darśana* of Kṣīra-corā Gopīnātha in Remunā, visited Bhuvaneśvara, and had *darśana* of Saksī Gopāla.

Once in Puri, the Ṭhākuras visited Nimbārka *sādhu* Dukhī Śyāmabābā, Śrī Paramānanda Puri's well, Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura's *saṁādhi*, Śrī Ṭoṭā Gopīnātha, and many other places. Bhaktivinoda

Thākura told Sarasvatī Thākura about Mahāprabhu's footprints in the precincts of the Jagannātha temple. He also spoke on how Mahāprabhu used to stand behind the Garuḍa Pillar to have *darśana* of Lord Jagannātha. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura then did the same, before having *darśana* of Lord Jagannātha. In this way, he set an ideal for all the Vaiṣṇavas to follow.

Also, it was during this trip that Śrīla Sarasvatī Thākura requested Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura to manifest a place of *bhajana* on the bank of the ocean, near Śrīla Haridāsa Thākura's *samādhi*. According to the instructions of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura, Jagabandhu Paṭṭanāyaka Mahāśaya, the Sub-Registrar of Puri tried acquiring the services of Śrī Giridhārī (of Satāsana Maṭha) on behalf of Śrīla Sarasvatī Thākura.

In March of 1901, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura and Śrīla Sarasvatī Thākura came to Puri once again, and in 1902, the building of a Bhakti-kuṭīra near Śrīla Haridāsa Thākura's *samādhi* started. Maṇīnacandra Nandī Bāhādūra, the King of Kāśim-bazaar, also came to Puri at this time. Separation from a loved one made him seek refuge there. He heard many instructions from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura.

While residing in Bhakti-kuṭīra in 1903, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura listened to the classes and explanations of Śrīla Sarasvatī Thākura on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. In those days, a person called Carāṇa dāsa Mahāśaya was wandering throughout Puri, singing his "Chāḍā" *kīrtanas*. He didn't have the courage though to also sing his songs in the presence of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura. The Thākura gave him many instructions on the appearance of a *paramahāṁsa*, on *varṇāśrama-dharma*, and on *pañcarātrikī-*

dikṣā, but Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, seeing Caraṇa dāsa Bābājī's behavior and *sakhī-bekhī* practices that were opposed to *vaiṣṇava-siddhānta*, strongly opposed him. When Caraṇa dāsa Bābājī came to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to seek reconciliation, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explained for two hours how the *sakhī-bekhī* conceptions are opposed to the teachings of the *mahājanas* (spiritual preceptors) and the scriptures.

Because of speaking the unyielding truth, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura was disliked by many opposing non-devotees. Drawing parallels from Rāmānujācārya's stay in Tirunārāyaṇapura, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructed Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura to reside in Māyāpura.

After some time had passed, Caraṇa dāsa Bābājī saw Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura walk, together with Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, at Kulyā's Baḍāl-ghāṭa. Caraṇa dāsa Bābājī emerged from his *āśrama* and humbly told Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, "Vimalā-prasāda (Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura) is the only pure abode of the assembly of Vaiṣṇavas." Around the same time, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura (while accompanying Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura) had *darśana* of Kulyā's revered saint Śrīla Vāṁśī dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja for the first time.

While Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura resided in Śrīdhāma Māyāpura, Caraṇa dāsa Bābājī and his many followers helped to support the festivals that were held there, but Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura never supported the views followed by his group. He was unyielding in this regard. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura called Caraṇa dāsa Bābājī to Māyāpura the next year and told him to prepare himself for arranging the *Navadvīpa-dhāma parikramā*.

Caraṇa dāsa Bābājī happily accepted this proposal, but then left his body on 25 February 1906. Therefore, he could not take part in the *parikramā*.

In 1906, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura went to Māyāpura on the 3rd of February. He visited Kolkata on February 26th, and then returned to Godrumadvīpa's Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja. Around this time, Vasanta Kumāra Ghoṣa, a follower of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, presented a copy of the *Dhyānacandra Paddhati* to Vipinacandra Gosvāmī.

Tarakabrahma Gosvāmī, a resident of Yasohara's Harinadagrāma, collected some money from ordinary people and had Deities made of Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava. He then brought those Deities to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in Godruma and requested him to install Them in Māyāpura at the Yogapīṭha on the same day as the Deity of Mahāprabhu was to be installed. He also requested to be given the service of looking after the Deities.

Mahāprabhu and the Rādhā-Mādhava Deities were installed in Māyāpura, and Tarakabrahma started residing near the temple, along with his wife, son-in-law, and two sons. Not long after, however, many people came to notice incidents of offensive misbehavior in him and he was opposed by those selfsame people. On 29 April 1906, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura arranged for a Dhāma Pracāriṇī Sabhā in Bhakti-bhavana, where he gave five hundred rupees to Tārakabrahma (for having made the Deities) and cleared any future prospects of being indebted to him.

A DELINEATION OF DAIVA-VARNĀŚRAMA-DHARMA

On 30 March 1910, Jagadīśa Bhakti Pradīpa (who later became Śrīla Bhakti Pradīpa Tīrtha Gosvāmī Mahārāja) received initiation from

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in Godruma. One of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's most sincere disciples, Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī, used to live with him in Godruma at that time. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gave many instructions to Jagadīśa Bhakti Pradīpa on the proper observance of *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma* and then gave Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura the responsibility to perform the *upanāyana-saṁskāra* (sacred-thread-giving ceremony) for Jagadīśa Bhakti Pradīpa, Sītā-nātha Mahāpātra Bhakti Tīrtha, Vasanta Kumāra Ghoṣa Bhaktyāśrama, and Manmathanātha Rāya. The mood of *trṇād-apisunīca* and servitude to Śrī Guru, who is Paramahaṁsa, was instilled in their hearts.

Bhakti Tīrtha Mahāśaya was not present on the day of the sacred thread-giving ceremony. On the order of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura performed the thread-giving ceremony for the other afore-mentioned three devotees in Bhakti-bhavana. He did so according to the principles stated in Śrīla Gopāla Bhatta Gosvāmī's *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā*.

The first step in becoming a Vaiṣṇava is to observe *viṣṇu-bhakti* while being properly situated in *daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma*. Rāghavācarya, a householder Rāmānujīya Vaiṣṇava of South Indian heritage, used to come to Bhakti-bhavana to discuss the purports of the *śāstras* with Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. One day, while discussing the life of Śrī Rāmānujācārya, Rāghavācarya said: "The ultimate *sādhya* (goal) and *sādhana* (the means to attain the goal) is to practice *viṣṇu-bhakti* while being situated in *varṇāśrama-dharma*." He requested Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to support his statement, but the Ṭhākura instead quoted many evidences from the conversation between Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī

Rāmānanda Rāya, which has been described in the eighth chapter of Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta's *Madhya-līlā*. He thus established that *prema-bhakti*, which is transcendental to *varṇāśrama-dharma*, is the topmost attainment.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura ended by saying: "The arrangement made for becoming a Vaiṣṇava while practicing *viṣṇu-bhakti* in *varṇāśrama-dharma* is only for those who cannot understand such statements of the scriptures. Although the scriptures also state the necessity to observe *viṣṇu-bhakti* in *varṇāśrama-dharma*, the limbs of *prema-bhakti* followed by the *bhāgavata-paramahāṁsa* is the topmost ideal."

After listening to these words of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Rāghavācārya thought that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was insulting Śrī Rāmānujācārya, his *saṁpradāya*'s leading preceptor. The Ṭhākura tried in many ways to explain more and convince Rāghavācārya that this was not the case, but nevertheless, Rāghavācārya left Bhakti-bhavana in an unhappy mood. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura then spoke the following words in this regard to Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura:

"Vaiṣṇava-dharma as practiced by the society at large is not the same as *paramārthika-vaiṣṇava-dharma*, which is one-pointed. The perfection of *śaranāgati* cannot be attained by following *varṇāśrama-dharma* only. According to one of the last *ślokas* of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, it is necessary to renounce all previous forms of *varṇa* and *āśrama* to become established in the liberated soul's causeless and pure attachment to practicing *bhagavad-bhakti*. A soul who is practicing as such is situated on the topmost platform of transcendence. The glories of the Gaudiya Vaiṣṇavas'

causeless pure devotion is not within the grasp of Rāghavācārya and other scholars."

BHAKTIVINODA, HE WHO CHEATS THE OPPOSED

While residing in Godruma's Svānanda-sukhada-kuṇja in 1910, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura became ill while writing *Svāniyamadvādaśakam*. Upon receiving this news, the atheistic fruitive workers considered this act of deception displayed by an eternal associate of Bhagavān to be like the suffering experienced by a conditioned soul upon receiving his fruits of *karma*. After coloring their clouded judgment with many speculations, they started to preach this misunderstanding of theirs.

One day, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura became greatly distressed and humbly told Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, "Out of your causeless mercy, please remain manifest in this world for a longer time. Your *kathā* on the glories of Śrīman Mahāprabhu guarantees the auspiciousness of this world." Heeding to this request of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura became healthy again. Upon beholding such divinity, the atheistic opponents approached Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and took shelter of his lotus feet.

Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has presented the deep meaning of the pastime of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's illness in the following way in his *Anubhāṣya* commentary to *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

*śrī gaura-vimukha-bhāva rādhā-kṛṣṇa premābhāva
bhaktivinoda dekhe jabe
saṁsārera dekhi gati kṛṣṇa-bhakti-hina mati
vāta-vyādhi-chale maunī tabe*

*avalambhi jaḍa-bhāva jaḍatyāge vraja lābha
 anukṣana ei kathā mukhe
 kṛṣṇa-bhakti-śūnya dharā dekhi prakāśila jarā
 antara daśāya bhaje sukhe*
*michā bhakta abhimāne mūḍha loka nāhi jāne
 aparādha kaila bhakta-pāya*
*nija kṣudra adhikāre chāyā bhakta dekhabāre
 avašeṣe aparādha hāya*
*jīvera durgāti heri kata aśrupāta kari
 śuddha-bhakti karite pracāra*
*adeśila bhaktarāja kara gaurahari kāja
 ebe tumi kariyā ācāra*

Although Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was displaying a pastime of illness, he had a strong desire in his heart to preach the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (*gaura-vāṇī*). He used to say, "Although I cannot walk now, it is my desire to ride on a horse and preach Gaurahari's message from one country to another, and from one village to another."

After having performed his illness pastime in Godruma, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura returned to Bhakti-bhavana in Kolkata. At that time, Śrīla Gaurakiṣora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja spoke the following words to a caste Gosvāmī with the intention of cheating him: "You should go to Kolkata and facilitate Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's return from Māyā's abode, Kolkata. You should carry him on your shoulders and thus bring him back to Śrīdhāma Navadvīpa Māyāpura."

When the caste Gosvāmī arrived in Kolkata and repeated these words, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura could understand the

intention of Śrīla Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, who was his dedicated follower. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura realized that Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja, whose renunciation was unprecedented, actually desired to bless that caste Gosvāmī.

The Ṭhākura then explained to the caste Gosvāmī that he is continuously absorbed in his *bhajana* in Bhakti-bhavana. By his own example, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura taught the meaning of the following statements:

*āhuś ca te nalina-nābha padāravindam
yogeśvarair hṛdi vicintyam agādha-bodhaiḥ
saṁsāra-kūpa-patitottaraṇāvalambam
gehaṁ juṣām api manasy udīyāt sadā naḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.82.48

The *gopīs* spoke thus: Dear Lord, whose navel is like a lotus flower, Your lotus feet are the only refuge for those who have fallen into the dark well of material life. Your feet are worshiped and meditated upon by great mystic *yogīs* and highly learned philosophers. We desire that these lotus feet may also manifest within our hearts, although we are only ordinary women engaged in household duties.

*je-dina gṛhe, bhajana dekhi, gṛhete goloka bhāya
carāṇa-sīdhū, dekhiyā gaṅgā, sukha nā sīmā pāya*

Śuddha-bhakata (6)

My home is transformed into Goloka Vṛndāvana when I see Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's worship being performed there. When the Gaṅgā sees the glories of the *carāṇāmṛta* of pure Vaiṣṇavas, her happiness knows no bounds.

BHAKTIVINODA, HE WHO OPPOSED THE VIEWS OF THE ATHEISTS

Two young disciples of Bāghnapādā's Vipina Bihārī Gosvāmī Mahāśaya, called Yādavendranandana Chaudhary (a landlord of Medinīpura) and Śrīyukta Sītānātha Bhakti Tīrtha, were instigated by a certain person to regard the *vaiṣṇava-ācāryas* according to their caste. They presented a higher seat to a *smārta-avaiṣṇavas*, who belonged to a seminal lineage.

Bhakti Tīrtha Mahāśaya wrote a letter to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura and told of him of what happened. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura vociferously said, "When *vaiṣṇava-dharma* is being opposed this way, is there anyone who can preach the *siddhānta* (established philosophical principles) that the Gosvāmīs preached and that was spoken by Mahāprabhu Himself? Is there anyone who can oppose the views of such opponents of the truth?"

Śrīla Sarasvatī Thākura fell at the feet of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura and said, "If you kindly bestow your mercy upon me and empower me, then I, your unqualified servant, presents myself to take on the entire responsibility of fulfilling this task."

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura became very happy hearing these words. After giving his blessings to Śrīla Sarasvatī Thākura, he sent him, together with Śrīyukta Sureścandra Mukhopadyāya (a resident of Vanagrāma), to attend the assembly of Medinīpura-Bālighāī-Uddhavapura that was to be held on September 6th, 1911.

Another assembly was held in Śrīpaṭa Gopīvallabhapura from 8 to 11 September. The great scholar Śrīyukta Viśvambhārananda Deva Gosvāmī Mahāśaya was the chairman of this assembly. In the presence of the learned scholar Śrī Madhusūdana Gosvāmī

(a resident of Vṛndāvana's Rādhā-ramaṇa Gherā) and others, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura presented an irrefutable comparison between *brāhmaṇas* and Vaiṣṇavas, steeped in the conclusions and infallible logic of all the scriptures. His unprecedented discourse made the members of the opposing group completely speechless. By receiving and accepting the victory garland (*vijaya-mālā*), he greatly increased the happiness of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

On 3 January 1912, Śrī Madhusūdana Gosvāmī of Rādhā-ramaṇa Gherā came to Bhakti-bhavana to have the *darśana* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. The Ṭhākura spoke to him with great enthusiasm about the all-round protection and spreading of the Gauḍīya *saṁpradāya*. He also told Śrī Madhusūdana Gosvāmī, "I am leaving Śrī Siddhānta Sarasvatī behind to accomplish this task on an unprecedented scale."

THE LINE OF ŚRĪ BHAKTIVINODA

Around the same time, following the order of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura established the 'Bhāgavata Press' in South Kolkata and started making special efforts to fulfill Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *mano 'bhiṣṭa* (innermost heart's desire) by preaching the message of Mahāprabhu (*gaura-vāṇi*).

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had written a commentary on the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, called 'Amṛta-prāvaha Bhāṣya'. Following in the Ṭhākura's footsteps, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura also started writing a commentary for the selfsame scripture, called 'Anubhāṣya'. On 1 September 1913, he recited portions of his *Anubhāṣya* commentary to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. When the Ṭhākura heard Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's unprecedented explanation on the line,

“Ei tina ṭhākura gauḍīyāke kariyāchen ātmasāt,” he became extremely pleased. His happiness knew no bounds, as the explanation of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura embodied all forms of *bhakti-siddhānta* (established philosophical principles of devotion).

In the presence of everyone, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura then made a prophecy. He proclaimed, “Siddhānta Sarasvatī will be the emperor of *bhakti-siddhānta*. He will be the savior of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *saṁpradāya*.” Saying these words, he bestowed his mercy on Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. He also expressed his desire to reside in Vraja-pattana Śrī Caitanya Maṭha (Śrīdhāma Māyāpura’s Candraśekhara Ācārya Bhavana).

In March of 1914, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sent a letter to Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who was residing in Māyāpura, in which he expressed his desire to return to Godruma. When Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura arrived at Bhakti-bhavana in Kolkata with the intent of bringing Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to Godruma, some people objected. However, when they realized that they were unable to change Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s mind, they all went to the Sealdah railway station from where Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura was to return to Māyāpura, and left Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura with him. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura then spoke the following words to Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura:

*asmābhiryadhanuṣṭheyam
gandharvaistadanuṣṭhitham*

This incident occurred on 20 April. Many followers requested Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to return. Heeding to their requests, he returned to Bhakti-bhavana on 22 May 1914.

On 23 June 1914, 9 Āśādha, Gaurajana “Gaurāṅga-eka-gati” Oṁ Viṣṇupāda Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura entered the midday pastimes of Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa while residing at Bhakti-bhavana. Six years later, on this same day, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura’s mother, Ṭhākurāṇī Parama-pujyā Śrīyukta Bhagavatī-devī also departed to the eternal abode.

ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA AND ŚRĪ GAUDĪYA GĪTI-GUCCHA

Although Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s sheltered servants (the Six Gosvāmīs) and other Gaudīya ācāryas wrote many books full of *siddhānta* in the Sanskrit language, people in general were unable to grasp the contents and deep purports of these *granthas* (sacred texts). Even the educated elite was deprived of a proper understanding of the scriptures. The most compassionate Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote many *kīrtanas* in simple and easy to understand Bengali, which embody the unparalleled philosophy of the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas. Thus, the elevated imports of the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava scriptures that were written in Sanskrit were made easily available and accessible to even those who didn’t understand Sanskrit.

By singing and remembering these *kīrtanas* under the guidance of Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas, even an ordinary person will become free of ignorance, loose his aversion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and become completely established in the philosophical principles of *bhagavad-bhakti*. Thus, he will continuously bathe in the nectarean ocean of devotion (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*). By engaging in such *śravaṇa-kīrtana* of the *kīrtanas* written by the predecessor ācāryas, the topmost limb of *bhakti* is duly observed.

With his *kīrtanas*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura did not facilitate the sense gratification of the conditioned souls. Rather, he only brought pleasure to the senses of Adhokṣaja (infallible) Śrī Bhagavān. All of his *kīrtanas* embody instructions that pave the way for quick advancement in the realm of devotion. Indeed, every *kīrtana* resounds with the *siddhānta* of pure devotion.

After bathing in the nectarean Svarūpa-Rūpānuga-Bhaktivinoda line of thought, a *sādhaka* who desires to have audience of the pastimes of Śrī Rādhā Mādhava in Śrī Gaurasundara, and Śrī Gaurasundara's pastimes in Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, should engage in *śravaṇa-kīrtana* of the songs written by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He should do so in the association of like-minded devotees, who may be superior to himself (*sajātīyāśaya-snigdha*). Thus, all the desires of his heart will be fulfilled.

The Śruti-sing of *rasa-svarūpa* Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Sabala Brahma); *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* sings of unconditional surrender unto the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* contains many *kīrtanas* sung for Kṛṣṇa by the *paramahāṁsas*; *Śikṣāṣṭakam* is a compilation of Śrī Caitanyaadeva's *kīrtanas*; Śrī Jayadeva Gosvāmī has exquisitely written many *kīrtanas* in *Gīta-Govinda*; as has Śrīla Guṇarāja Khān in his *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-vijaya*. Śrīla Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura's *kīrtanas* have been recorded by the Lord Himself in *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta*. The *kīrtanas* written by Caṇḍīdāsa, Vidyāpati, Rāmānanda Rāya, Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura provide nectar for Śrī Gaurasundara's ears (*gaura-karṇāmṛta*). The *kīrtanas* written and sung by all the predecessor ācāryas are likened to an unending

festival of matchless devotion. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *kīrtanas* serve to enhance this festival of pure devotion. Thus, the transcendental fervor of this festival scales new heights. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *kīrtanas* embody such sweetness that the participants of this festival were overwhelmed by the highest form of divine emotions.

Therefore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *kīrtanas* are the containers of *bhajanāmr̄ta*, or nectar of devotion. By the medium of his *kīrtanas*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has given the nectar of auspiciousness in charity to the entire world. Even if all the writers of innumerable universes (including Ganeśa himself) would use all the innumerable oceans as ink in their pens—they would still never be able to fully describe Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's limitless compassion. This is not an exaggeration or an overstatement.

The storehouse of Vaiṣṇava literature is full of invaluable gems. The storehouse of Gaudiya Vaiṣṇava literature especially consists of many wonderful *kīrtanas* by the predecessor *ācāryas*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *kīrtanas* have munificently described *sambandha-jñāna* (knowledge of one's eternal relationship) for the betterment of all the conditioned souls. Every *kīrtana* describes the transcendental setting of *nāma-haṭṭa* (the marketplace of the holy name). Thus, the *kīrtana* serves to manifest the mood of sweeping one's heart of all misgivings, and making it a fit abode for the Lord to reside. Such descriptions portrayed by the *kīrtanas* are second to none.

In his *Śaraṇāgati*, *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*, *Gitamālā*, *Gitāvali*, *Soka-śātana*, *Bāul-saṅgīta*, *Dālālera-gāna*, *Bhajana-rahasya*,

and other books of *kīrtanas*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has described the stages of *kleśāgnī* (the fire of suffering), *śubhadā* (the appearance of auspicious qualities), *mokṣa-laghutākṛt* (minimization of the value of liberation), *sudurlabhā* (rarely achieved), *sāndrānanda-viśeṣātmā* (condensed, unlimited happiness), and *śrī-kṛṣṇākarṣiṇī* (the means to attract Kṛṣṇa). We will also try to do *anukīrtana* of these *kīrtanas*.

The final instruction of the *Bhagavad-gītā* is surrender. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has described the topmost stage of surrender in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. By his life and precepts, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has exemplified this topmost stage of surrender. He has also written many essays and books that help the *sādhaka* to achieve such a stage of surrender, and gave a wonderful description of the six limbs of surrender in his *kīrtanas*. In his *Bhakti-sandarbha*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has shed further light on the most prominent of the six limbs of surrender that have been described in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*.

*ānukūlyasya saṅkalpah
prātikūlyā-vivarjanam
rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāso
goptṛtve varāṇam tathā
ātma-nikṣepa-kārpaṇye
saḍ-vidhā śaraṇāgatiḥ*

'The six divisions of surrender are: the acceptance of those things favorable to devotional service, the rejection of unfavorable things, the conviction that Kṛṣṇa will give protection, the acceptance of the Lord as one's guardian or master, full self-surrender, and humility.'

He has said that of these six limbs, the limb of *goptṛtve varanam* (the acceptance of Kṛṣṇa as one's guardian or master) is the root (*āṅgi*) of the other five limbs (*āṅgas*) of surrender. Those who have not accepted Kṛṣṇa as their sole guardian, or have the slightest doubt in accepting His maintenance—are not fully surrendered. The *gopīs*, who have fully surrendered themselves unto Kṛṣṇa, are the quintessence of this limb of *goptṛtve varanam*.

In his first *kīrtana* of *Śaraṇāgati*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has said:

śrī kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu jīve dayā kari'
sva-pārṣada svīya dhāma saha avatāri' (1)

Out of compassion for the living beings, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu descended in this world along with His personal associates and divine abode.

atyanta durlabha prema karibāre dāna
sikhāya śaraṇāgati bhakatera prāṇa (2)

In order to bestow the extremely rare treasure of *prema-bhakti*, He taught *śaraṇāgati*, which is the life and soul of the devotees.

dainya, ātma-nivedana, goptṛtve varāṇa
'avaśya rakṣibe kṛṣṇa'—*viśvāsa-pālana* (3)

Humility, submission of the self, acceptance of the Lord as one's only maintainer, faith in Kṛṣṇa's protection.

bhakti-anukūla-mātra kāryera svikāra
bhakti-pratikūla-bhāva varjanāṅgikāra (4)

Acceptance of acts favorable for *bhakti* and rejection of that which is unfavorable.

*śad-aṅga śaraṇāgati haibe jāhāra
tāhāra prārthanā sune śrī nanda-kumāra* (5)

Whoever embodies each of these six facets of *śaraṇāgati* has their prayers heard by the son of Nanda Mahārāja.

*rūpa-sanātana-pade dante tṛṇa kori'
bhakti-vinoda pade duhū pada dhari'* (6)

With a straw between his teeth, Bhaktivinoda prostrates himself before Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana, embracing their lotus feet.

*kādiyā kādiyā bole “āmi to’ adhama
śikhāye śaraṇāgati karo he uttamā”* (7)

Weeping, he says, “I am the lowest of men! Kindly teach me unconditional surrender and make me an excellent Vaiṣṇava.”

We call out to Śrī Bhagavān by chanting His names. These prayers will only bear fruit for the surrendered devotee. Without surrender, Bhagavān will not listen to the prayers of anyone. After praying to Bhagavān many people think, “We called out to Bhagavān so many times. But He didn’t listen to even one of our prayers.”

But they never think, “Why isn’t Bhagavān listening to our prayers?” Therefore, to make everyone understand the reason of their unhappiness, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has said, “Śrī

Nandanandana Kṛṣṇa only listens to the prayers of His surrendered devotees."

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has descended to bestow the extremely rare treasure of *prema*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has composed his *Śaraṇāgati* prayers in order to teach everyone on how to attain this *prema*. Therefore, clasping the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura prays to be taught the six-fold process of *śaraṇāgati*. It is important to note that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura doesn't want to become superior to everyone else.

According to body, mind, and words, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has divided *Śaraṇāgati* into six stages. These six stages are further divided into three stages that correspond to the body, mind, and words. A person who becomes pure at heart by the practice of *śaraṇāgati*, becomes eligible to achieve pure *bhakti*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has described how the qualities of humility and disregard for worldly objects will appear in a *sādhaka* in whom the mood of *śaraṇāgati* has manifested. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has spoken about this mood in his *kīrtana*, "Bhuliyā tomāre samsāre-āsiyā." This mood has also been described in *kīrtanas* 6, 7, 9, and 10 of *Śaraṇāgati*.

He has described the condition of a soul ensnared by *samsāra* in the following fifth *kīrtana* of *Śaraṇāgati*:

āmāra jīvana, sadā pāpe rata,
nāhiko puṇyera leśa
parere udvega, diyāchi je kata,
diyāchi jīvere kleśa

My life is perpetually dedicated to sin; thus I am without a trace of piety. I have given others great anxiety and brought only misery to living beings.

When such a mood of humility arises in a person's heart, he starts searching for a *śravaṇa-guru* and a *dikṣā-guru*. Although the conditioned soul is fallen and degraded, Śrī Kṛṣṇa always inspires such a soul to seek the shelter of a *śravaṇa-guru* and a *dikṣā-guru*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has described the mood with which a conditioned soul searches for the lotus feet of Śrī Guru-pāda-padma. This mood is described in the eighth *kīrtana* of *Śaraṇāgati*:

*prabhu he!
emana durmati, saṁsāra-bhitare, paḍiyā āchinu āmi
tava nija-jana, kono mahājane, pāṭhāiyā dile tumi*

Oh Lord! Such a wicked mind has brought me into this world, but one of Your pure and elevated devotees has come to bring me out of it.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has especially described the mood of *ātma-samārpana* (complete self-surrender) in his eleventh *kīrtana* of *Śaraṇāgati* (*mānasa deha geha*). Such a description is second to none. In this *kīrtana*, the mood of *ātma-nivedana* is stated:

*janaka, jananī, dayitā, tanaya
prabhu, guru, pati—tuhū sarvamaya*

“Father, mother, beloved, son, lord, preceptor, and husband—
You are everything to me.”

In *kīrtana* 12 of *Śaraṇāgati*, Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has described how a surrendered *sādhaka* will discard the tenth offense to the holy name i.e. the mood of "I" and "mine."

*'āmi' śabde dehī jīva ahamtā chādila
tvadīyābhimāna āji hṛdaye paśila*

The soul inhabiting this mortal body has given up the false ego attached to the word "I", for today the spiritual sense of being Yours has entered his heart.

A *jīva* will become free of all anxieties when he submits his self at the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He will only be preoccupied with the thought of rendering service, which then becomes his inherent constitutional position. He will then be unaffected by happiness and sorrow while rendering his services. Many sorrows may present themselves in the surrendered *sādhaka*'s endeavors to serve Śrī Hari, Guru, and Vaiṣṇavas, but he will accept them as sources of great happiness. He will forget his past history and he will have no other desire than to serve Kṛṣṇa. By directing all his efforts towards *kṛṣṇa-sevā*, he will attain perfection of his self (*svarūpa-siddhi*).

*tomāra sevāya, duḥkha haya jata, seo to' parama sukha
sevā-sukha-duḥkha, parama-sampada, nāśaye avidyā-duḥkha*
Śaraṇāgati 15

In the course of serving You, whatever difficulties may come are indeed the topmost joy. The pains and pleasures of service [to You] are the greatest assets, for they destroy the misery of nescience.

*pūrva-itihāsa, bhulinu sakala, sevā-sukha pe'ye mane
āmi to' tomāra, tumi to' āmāra, ki kāja apara dhane*

Śaraṇāgati 15

I have completely forgotten my past history, due to experiencing the joy of service to You. All I know is that I am Yours and You are mine. What need is there of any other treasure?

Bhajana begins after such a mood of *śaraṇāgati* arises. Then the *sādhaka* humbly prays in the following way:

*bhakativinoda, kādiyā śaraṇa, la'yeche tomāra pāya
kṣami' aparādha, nāme ruci diyā, pālana karahe tāya*

Śaraṇāgati 17

Weeping, Bhaktivinoda has taken refuge at Your feet. Please forgive my offenses and give me a taste for the holy name. Maintain me in this way.

A surrendered soul will live his life in *kṛṣṇa-saṁsāra* as thus:

*tomāra saṁsāre, karibo sevana, nahibo phalera bhāgī
tava sukha jāhe, karibo jatana, ha'ye pade anurāgī*

Śaraṇāgati 18

I shall serve in Your household, never partaking of the fruits [of my labor]. I shall diligently tend to Your satisfaction only, being fully dedicated to Your feet.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has described the life of a surrendered soul in the following *kīrtana*:

*sarvasva tomāra, caraṇe sāpiyā, podechi tomāra ghare
tumi to' ṭhākura, tomāra kukura, boliyā jānaho more*

Śaraṇāgati 19

Having surrendered everything at Your lotus feet, I remain prostrated at Your house. You are my Lord. Kindly accept me as Your dog.

After *śaraṇāgati*, a mood of deep respect will manifest for Śrī Parameśvara. This mood has been described in *kīrtanas* 20, 21, and 22 of the *Śaraṇāgati* prayers. And then, a mood of *viśrambha-sānta*, intimacy in neutrality, manifests. The mood that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the maintainer of the cows (*go-pālaka*) is described in this prayer:

*tuyā dhana jāni' tuhuṇ rākhobi, nātha!
pālyā godhana jñāna kori' tuyā sātha*

Śaraṇāgati 23

O Lord, I am confident of Your protection, for, like one of Your cows or calves, I am Your treasured property.

This *kīrtana* also describes how a surrendered soul serves Kṛṣṇa in the mood of *viśrambha-dāsyā* (servitude), *sakhyā* (friendship), and *vātsalyā* (parental love).

The next prayer of *Śaraṇāgati* describes how the surrendered soul relinquishes his mood of a being an enjoyer and performs *kṛṣṇa-bhajana* in *madhura-rati* (conjugal attachment) under the guidance of a *guru-rūpa sakhi* (the form of a spiritual master as a cowherd damsel who serves under the guidance of Śrīmatī Rādhikā).

*chodāta puruṣa-abhimāna
kiṅkari hailuṇ ājī, kāna!*

Śaraṇāgati 24

I will give up the mood of male egoism, O Kāna. Now I am Your faithful maidservant.

In *kīrtana* 25 of *Śaraṇāgati*, the intrinsic nature of atheism, doubt, concoction of images, impersonalism, imagining the Lord to be divested of His potencies, aversion to *bhakti*, speculations, cheaters, and the cheated is stated. Knowing that the persons who possess such moods are *duhsanga* (detrimental association), the devotee offers his obeisances from afar to them and avoids their association. People of such ill-intentions spread their net of material enjoyment (*bhukti*) and liberation (*mukti*), and cheat society at large. The thirst for *bhukti* and *mukti* completely contradicts the mood of *śaraṇāgati*.

*tava koi nija-mate, bhukti, mukti yācata,
pātai nānā-vidha phāda
so-sabu-vañcaka, tuyā bhakti bahira-mukha,
ghaṭāoye viṣama paramāda
vaimukha-vañcane, bhaṭaso sabu,
niramila vividha pasāra
danḍavata dūrataḥ, bhaktivinoda bhela,
bhakata-caraṇa kari' sāra*

Śaraṇāgati 25

Some expound their own opinion, offering various pleasures and liberation as reward, however this is only a trap. They are just great cheaters, being averse to Your devotional service, and are therefore a source of fatal danger. Every one of them are cunning cheats, offering various kinds of bribes for cheating the souls who are averse to You. Offering respect to these cheaters from afar, Bhaktivinoda takes refuge at the feet of Your devotees as the essence of his life.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has clearly stated how a surrendered devotee will avoid, or renounce, all forms of detrimental association (*asat-saṅga*), which is unfavorable for *bhakti* in every way. The devotee does so with unflinching faith.

*tuyā-bhakti-bahir-mukha saṅga nā karibo
gaurāṅga-virodhi-jana-mukha nā heribo*

Śaraṇāgati 26

I will not share company with those against Your devotional service, nor even look at the faces of those averse toward Śrī Gaurāṅga.

Among all forms of such detrimental association that is completely unfavorable to *bhakti*, the association of Māyāvādīs, or impersonalists, is most prominent. The Māyāvādī's association is so unfavorable to *bhakti* that it eclipses even the harmful effects of associating with a material sense enjoyer (*viśayī*) or a sinner (*pāpī*).

*se duyera madhye viśayī tabu bhāla
māyāvādī-saṅga nāhi māgi kono kāla
dhik tā'ra kṛṣṇa-sevā-śravaṇa-kīrtana
kṛṣṇa-āṅge vajra hāne tāhāra stavana*

Śaraṇāgati 27

Yet of the two, the association of a sense enjoyer is far better. I never desire the company of a Māyāvādī. Condemned be his so-called service to Kṛṣṇa! His singing of prayers are like thunderbolts that strike Kṛṣṇa's body.

Having renounced all forms of unfavorable association, the surrendered devotee prays to be established in his perfected form

in *madhura-rati* (the permanent sentiment of conjugal attachment). His mood in this prayer is described in *kīrtana* 28 of *Śaraṇāgati*:

*āmi to' svānanda-sukhada-vāsi
rādhikā-mādhava-caraṇa-dāsi*

Oh! I am a resident of Svānanda-sukhada-kuṇja, and a maid-servant of the lotus feet of Rādhikā and Mādhava.

In the *kīrtanas* “*chodata puruṣa-abhimāna*” and “*āmi to svānanda-sukhada-vāsi*,” Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has described the nature of Kṛṣṇa’s *anurāga-mayi* pastimes. The “*āmi to svānanda-sukhada-vāsi*” *kīrtana* describes the need to abandon unfavorable association even in the transcendental realm, which lies beyond all material deficiencies. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes this mood through the pastimes of Vraja.

Kīrtana 29 of *Śaraṇāgati* explains how a surrendered devotee serves the favorable moods of *bhakti*. Except envy, all the other enemies (lust, anger, greed, etc.) can be made one’s friends by engaging them in *kṛṣṇa-sevā*. But there is no place for envy in any form in *nirmatsara* (non-envious) *bhāgavata-dharma*.

*bhakti-ānukūla jata viṣaya samsāre
karibo tāhāte rati indriyera dvāre*

Śaraṇāgati 29

I will be attached to those things in this world which are favorable to pure devotion, and with my senses I will engage them in Your service.

In his *kīrtana*, “*godruma-dhāme bhajana-anukaraṇe mathurā-śrī-nandīśvara-samatule*,” Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura depicts how a surrendered devotee spontaneously remembers the *anurāga-*

mayī pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (*gaura-līlā*). In this *kīrtana*, he has sung:

*vaiṣṇava-jana-saha gāobuñ nāma
jaya godruma jaya gaura ki dhāma
bhaktivinoda bhakti-anukūla
jaya kuñja, muñja, sura-nadī-kūla*

Śaraṇāgati 30

In the association of devotees, I will sing the Name. All glories to Godrumadvīpa! All glories to the abode of Śrī Gaurāṅga! Bhaktivinoda glorifies all that is favourable to devotion. All glories to the groves, the grass, and the bank of the river Ganges!

In *kīrtana* 32 of *Śaraṇāgati*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes the *uddīpana* that stimulates the remembrance of *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. Thus, he sums up the various places of Vraja in this *kīrtana*:

*yugala-vilāse anukūla jāni
līlā-vilāsa-uddīpaka māni
e saba chodata kāhi nāhi jāu
e saba chodata parāṇa hārāu
bhaktivinoda, kahe śuno kāna!
tuyā uddīpaka hāmārā parāṇa*

I know that all these things are most conducive to the Divine Couple's loving exchanges, and thus I consider them *uddīpana* (stimuli) that inspire remembrance of Their playful, amorous pastimes. I will not go anywhere giving up such stimuli, for to abandon them is to give up my very life!

Bhaktivinoda says, "Please listen, O Kāna, Your *uddipana* is my very life and soul."

In the *rūpānuga bhajana-lālasā* section of *Śaraṇāgati*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has composed *kīrtanas* that directly correspond to the *ślokas* of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Upadeśāmṛta*. His first *kīrtana*, "hari he! prapañce pañcīyā," is based on the "vāco-vegam, manasa-vegam, udaropastha-vegam" *śloka* of *Upadeśāmṛta*.

hari he!

*prapañce podiyā, agati hoiyā, nā dekhi' upāya āra
agatira gati, caraṇe śaraṇa, tomāya korinu sāra*

O Hari! Having fallen into the material world of five elements and having become helpless, I see no refuge other than the shelter of Your feet, for You are the resort of the helpless. I have made You my all in all.

The second *kīrtana* corresponds to the "atyāhāra prayācasā" *śloka*

hari he!

*arthera sañcaye, viṣaya-prayāse, āna kathā prajalpane
āna adhikāra, niyama-āgrahe, asat-saṅga-saṅghaṭane*

O Hari! Due to accumulating excessive wealth, endeavoring for sense enjoyment, engaging in frivolous gossip, being eager to accept rules and regulations unsuited to my own qualification, keeping bad association...

In his *Upadeśāmṛta*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has stated all that is favorable and unfavorable to *bhakti*. He has described the six

urges, or thorns (obstacles), that are unfavorable to *bhakti*, and also the six exchanges that are favorable to *bhakti*. By authoring such *kīrtanas*, he has instructed everyone to pray earnestly.

Without the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas, the weak, conditioned soul can never have the strength to do *harināma-saṅkīrtana*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is only the property of the Vaiṣṇavas. Only the Vaiṣṇavas can give Śrī Kṛṣṇa to others. By being surrendered, the mood to serve the Vaiṣṇavas will arise, and the devotee will consider himself to be fallen. In such a mood, he will call out, "Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!" By praying for the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas in such a manner and by following in their footsteps, the devotee will attain perfection in his *sāraṇāgati*.

Although the utterance of Kṛṣṇa's names will seem bland to the tongue that is afflicted by the jaundice of ignorance, by respectfully and sincerely engaging in *nāma-kīrtana* under the guidance of Guru-Vaiṣṇavas, *ruci* (taste) for the holy name will arise.

The ten offenses to the holy name are the cause of the *jīvas'* misfortune. A devotee will become inclined to render service when he will be blessed with the mercy of Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas. By chanting the holy name under their guidance, all misfortune will be destroyed. The essence of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's instructions is:

The devotee should utilize his full time-twenty-four hours a day-in nicely chanting and remembering the Lord's divine name, transcendental form, qualities and eternal pastimes, thereby gradually engaging his tongue and mind more and more. In this way, he should reside in Vraja and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of His devotees. He should follow in the footsteps of the Lord's beloved devotees, who are deeply attached to His devotional service.

The only desire of the surrendered soul is to always be situated under the guidance of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

*hā! rūpa-gosāi, dayā kori' kabe,
dibe dine vraja-vāsā
rāgātmika tumi, tava padānuga,
haite dāsera āśā*

*Śaranāgati,
Rūpānuga-bhajana-lālasā 9*

Alas! O Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, when will you mercifully give this fallen soul residence in Vraja? You are *rāgātmikā* (a resident of Vraja whose heart is filled with spontaneous attachment to Kṛṣṇa) and the wish of this servant is to follow in your footsteps.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura always considered the forest of Godruma to be non-different from the banks of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Residing there, he always engaged in *hari-kīrtana* according to the advice of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. In this *kīrtana*, he is humbly praying to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī to bestow upon him the qualification to engage in one-pointed *bhajana* on the banks of Rādhā-kuṇḍa.

The word, “*kabe*” manifests Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s mood of separation. Thus, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has shown himself to be a follower of Rūpa Gosvāmī (*rūpānuga-gāṇa*) who engages in the worship of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in the mood of separation.

He has then prayed to Śrī Gurudeva to imbibe the qualities that Śrī Gaurasundara has spoken of in the following *sloka*, which highlights the qualification needed to engage in *nāma-bhajana*:

*tr̥ṇād api sunīcena
 taror iva sahiṣṇunā
 amāninā mānadena
 kīrtaniyah sadā hariḥ*

Śiksāṣṭakam 3

“Thinking oneself to be even lower and more worthless than insignificant grass, being more tolerant than a tree, being prideless, and honoring all others according to their respective positions, one should continuously chant the holy name of Śrī Hari.”

He thus prays to become humbler than a blade of grass and more tolerant than a tree, while offering respect to everyone without expecting any in return. By practicing *bhajana* in this manner, a surrendered soul will engage in *hari-bhajana* at every moment in the mood of separation.

After this *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has used the word “*kabe*” in every *kīrtana* of Śaraṇāgati’s *Rūpānuga-bhajana-lālasā*. The only meaning that can be derived of this is the mood of separation. “*Kintu kabe prabhu... kabe hena krpā... kabe mora sei dina habe... kabe tava karuṇā prakāše... kabe gaura-vane.*” All these *kīrtanas* were authored in the afore-mentioned mood.

Taking the support of Śrī Gaurasundara’s *Śiksāṣṭaka* prayers, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has implored in the *Vijñapti* section of Śaraṇāgati to obtain *ruci* for the holy name. Praying as such, he became absorbed in the mood of *vipralambha*.

*kabe habe bolo se-dina āmāra
 (āmāra) aparādha ghuci', śuddha nāme ruci,
 krpā-bale ha'be hrdaye sañcāra*

When, O when, will that day be mine? When by your blessings, will all my offenses be eradicated and a taste, *ruci*, for chanting the pure Holy Name be infused in my heart?

Those who relish the transcendental taste (*rasa*) of *harināma*, will never be satisfied by only relishing this *rasa* for themselves. The *ācārya* of *nāma-kīrtana* is *parā-duḥkha-duḥkhi*, he becomes sad upon noticing the plight of others. Therefore, he becomes transcendently delirious in his endeavors to make everyone else relish this *rasa* as well. This is the topmost form of compassion towards the conditioned souls.

*kabe jīve dayā, haibe udaya,
nija-sukha bhuli' sudīna-hṛdaya
bhakativinoda, kariyā vinaya,
śrī-ājñā-ṭahala karibe pracāra*

Vijñapti

When will I feel compassion for all living entities? When will I forget my own comfort and be truly humble? And when will I, Bhaktivinoda, beg from door to door, preaching your message of love?

*jāre dekha, tāre kaha 'krṣṇa'-upadeśa
āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra' ei deśa*

Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 7.128

"Help everyone to follow the orders of Śrī Krṣṇa, and in this way become *guru* and try to deliver everyone in this land."

*bhārata-bhūmite haila manusya janma jāra
janma sārthaka kari' kara parā-upakāra*

Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi 9.41

"Anyone who has taken birth as a human being in the land of Bhārata-varṣa (India) should make his life successful and work for the benefit of all other people."

This "śrī ajñā" is Mahāprabhu's order. The topmost form of compassion (*jive dayā*) is to relay Mahāprabhu's order to everyone. His order is:

*prabhura ājñāya, bhāi, māgi ei bhikṣā
bolo 'krṣṇa,' bhajo krṣṇa, karo krṣṇa-śikṣā
aparādha-śūnya ha'ye laho krṣṇa-nāma
krṣṇa mātā, krṣṇa pitā, krṣṇa dhana-prāna
krṣṇera sam'sāra karo chādi' anācāra
jīve dayā, krṣṇa-nāma—sarva-dharma-sāra*

Sajjana Toṣanī 6–8
[*Nadiyā-godrume*]

"By the order of Śrī Gaurāṅga, O brothers, I beg you: Chant Kṛṣṇa's holy name, worship Kṛṣṇa, and teach others about Kṛṣṇa. Being free from offenses, just take Kṛṣṇa's holy name. Kṛṣṇa is your mother, Kṛṣṇa is your father, and Kṛṣṇa is the wealth of your life. Giving up all sins, carry on your daily duties only in relation to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Showing compassion to other souls by loudly chanting Kṛṣṇa's holy name is the essence of all forms of religion."

By the medium of the "krṣṇa-nāma dhare kato ba'l kīrtana, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has conveyed the mood of the following verse of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.3.24):

tad aśma-sāram hṛdayaṁ batedaṁ
 yad gṛhyamāṇair hari-nāma-dheyaiḥ
 na vikriyetātha yadā vikāro
 netre jalāṁ gātra-ruheśu harṣaḥ

If in spite of chanting the Lord's holy name with focus, the heart does not undergo any change and no signs of transformation, such as tears in the eyes and hairs standing on end in ecstasy, take place, then one should understand that the heart is definitely made of iron.

By this, he has given invaluable instructions (while situated in *madhura-rati*) on the holy name's *tattva* (established philosophical principles), *rasa* (mellows of devotion), and *sevā* (service).

KALYĀNA-KALPATARU

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the eternal associate of Śrī Gaurasundara (who is a wish-fulfilling desire tree of *prema*) became very anxious upon witnessing the sorrows of the *jīvas*. Therefore, he brought *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru* from Vaikuṇṭha-dhāma to this material world. This *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru* is present in the eternally auspicious forest of Vaikuṇṭha. This auspicious forest has been described in the following way in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

yatra naiḥśreyasam nāma
 vanam kāma-dughair drumaiḥ
 sarvartu-śribhir vibhrājat
 kaivalyam iva mūrtimat

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.5.16

In those spiritual planets there are many forests that are very auspicious. In those forests, the trees are desire trees

and in all seasons they are filled with flowers and fruits, because everything in the Spiritual World is spiritual and personal.

In that realm, there is a forest of pure devotion, called *niḥśreyasa*. This forest is decorated by the flowers and fruits of all the seasons. In the *maṅgalācaraṇa* (auspicious invocation) of *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written:

*śrī-vaiṣṇtha-dhāme āche niḥśreyasavana
tāhe śobha paya kalpa-taru āganana
tāhā-mājhe ei kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru-rāja
nitya-kāla nitya-dhāme karena virāja
skhandha-traya āche tā'ra apūrva darśana
upadeśa, upalabdhi, ucchvāsa gaṇana
subhakti-prasūna tāhe ati sobhā pāya
'kalyāṇa' nāmaka phala āgaṇana tāya
je sujana ei viṭāpi karena āśraya
krṣṇa-sevā-su-kalyāṇa-phala tāra haya
śrī-guru-caraṇa-kṛpā-sāmarthya lābhiyā
e-hena apūrva vṛkṣa dilāma ānīyā*

*Maṅgalācaraṇa
Kalyāṇa-kalpataru (13-18)*

In the transcendental realm of Śrī Vaikuṇṭha-dhāma, there is a forest of the supreme perfection of life. Existing beautifully within that transcendental forest are innumerable wish-fulfilling desire-trees. Amongst all the desire-trees within this transcendental forest, there stands out one special tree, which is actually the King of them all. This one is named "the

Desire-tree of Auspiciousness," and it conspicuously exists here within the eternal abode for all of time.

What a wonderful sight is this special desire-tree, as it stands with its three-fold trunk! These three divisions branch out as *upadeśa* (spiritual advice), *upalabdhi* (attainment of realization), and *ucchavāsa* (overflowing spiritual emotions). This tree is very beautifully decorated with flower blossoms of especially sweet devotional service. Plus there are innumerable fruits, which are named *kalyāṇa* (auspiciousness).

Any honest or noble person who sincerely takes shelter of this transcendental tree will taste these fruits of special, supreme auspiciousness, which is devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. By utilizing the strength that I am obtaining from the mercy of the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudeva, I have now brought this wonderful Desire-tree of Auspiciousness here.

THE THREE DIVISIONS OF KALYĀṇA-KALPATARU

The three divisions of *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru* are:

- (1) *Upadeśa* (Transcendental Advice)
- (2) *Upalabdhi* (Attainment of Realization)
- (3) *Ucchavāsa* (Overflowing Spiritual Emotions)

Many flowers of pure devotion have blossomed on these three branches. This wish-fulfilling tree (*kalpa-vṛkṣa*) yields the fruits of auspiciousness (*kalyāṇa*). These fruits embody *aprākṛta-yugala-sevā* (transcendental loving service unto the lotus feet of the Divine Couple Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa). Therefore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has said:

*tomāra sakale hāo e vṛkṣera mālī¹
śraddhā-vāri diyā punah karo' rūpaśālī*

*phalibe kalyāṇa-phala—yugala-sevana
kariba sakale mili' tāhā āsvādana*

Maṅgalācarāṇa, Kalyāṇa-kalpataru (20–21)

Now I wish that all of you should become the gardeners of this transcendental tree and, by regularly watering it with your faith and devotion, make it beautiful again. By pouring the water of your faith, the fruits of auspiciousness will fructify into eternal service to the Divine Couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, which all of us together will taste and relish.

The *jīvas'* eternal auspiciousness lies in rendering service to the pastimes of Līlā-Puruṣottama Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is supremely independent. His *svarūpa-śakti* is always by His side.

In the *Maṅgalācarāṇa* of his *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has prayed to attain the shelter of *āśraya-vigraha* (the abode of devotion), Śrīmatī Jāhnavā Ṭhākurāṇī:

*nikhila vaiṣṇava-jana dayā prakāśīyā
śrī-jāhnavā-pade more rākhaha ṭāniyā*

Maṅgalācarāṇa, Kalyāṇa-kalpataru 5

I pray to all you assembled Vaiṣṇavas throughout the entire universe to please show your compassion by attracting me to the shade of the lotus feet of Śrī Jāhnavā-devī, my eternal shelter and the very potency of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu.

Prayers offered to Śrīmatī Jāhnavā Ṭhākurāṇī (who is non-different from Śrīmatī Anaṅga Maṅjari) are especially seen in Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *kīrtanas*. In his *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has spoken on *vaiṣṇava-sevā* after considering the qualification of all the Vaiṣṇavas. There is no

greater misfortune than not being able to recognize the Vaiṣṇavas from the *avaiṣṇavas*.

*āmi to' durbhāgā ati, vaiṣṇava nā cini
more kṛpā karibena vaiṣṇava āpani
śrī-guru-caraṇe more bhakti karo' dāna
je caraṇa-bale pāya tattvera sandhāna*

Maṅgalācaraṇa, Kalyāṇa-kalpataru 6-7

I am certainly most unfortunate, for I cannot realize who is actually a Vaiṣṇava. Therefore I beg, if any real Vaiṣṇava hears my prayer, then please be merciful to me. Please bestow upon me devotional service to the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudeva. Simply by the strength of those feet I can find a clue of the real transcendental truth.

By being non-duplicitous, prayerful, humble (while submitting one's self), and one-pointedly surrendered, Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura will grant the sincere *sādhaka* the ability to recognize the Vaiṣṇavas from the *avaiṣṇavas*. And then, by the mercy of Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura, causeless devotion to Śrī Guru-pāda-padma, the qualification to recognize the Vaiṣṇavas according to their gradation of devotion, and the lotus feet of the Lord, will manifest in the *sādhaka*'s heart.

UPADEŚA—THE FIRST BRANCH OF KALYĀΝA-KALPATARU

Upadeśa is the first of *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*'s three branches. At the start of *Upadeśa*, while describing the specialties of *dīkṣā-guru* and *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has said:

*dīkṣā-guru-kṛpā kari mantra-upadeśa
kariyā dekhāṇa kṛṣṇa-tattvera nirdeśa*

śikṣā-guru-vṛnda kṛpā kariyā āpāra
 sādhake śikhāṇa sādhanera aṅga-sāra
 śikṣā-guru-gaṇa-pade kariyā pranati
 upadeśa-mālā boli nija mana prati

The initiating spiritual master shows his causeless mercy by giving his disciples instructions in chanting the *harināma-mantra*. By so doing he points the disciples towards the direction of the truths pertaining to the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But I consider the numerous instructing spiritual masters to be more important, for they show unlimitedly more mercy by training the neophyte devotees in all the essential aspects of practical, regulative devotional service (*sādhana-bhakti*). Therefore, offering my prostrated obeisances unto the lotus feet of all instructing spiritual masters, I will now narrate this garland of different types of spiritual advice, which will all be directed towards my own mind.

In *Upadeśa*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has sung:

upadeśa-mālā boli nija mana prati

While aiming to reform his mind, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has authored nineteen *kīrtanas* for the eternal auspiciousness of the conditioned souls. By these *kīrtanas*, he has provided his priceless instructions. The conditioned souls of this world have deprived themselves of relishing the fruits of *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru* because of their *anarthas*. Some of these *anarthas* are fostering desires separate from pleasing Kṛṣṇa (*anyābhilāṣa*), *karma* (reward seeking activity), *jñāna* (endeavoring to cultivate impersonal knowledge), *yoga* (seeking mystic prowess), and *vrata*

(observing unnecessary vows). Therefore, by his causeless mercy, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has tried to liberate the conditioned souls from these *anarthas* by presenting transcendental logic and instructions through the medium of his *kīrtanas*. Pure *bhakti* cannot be attained as long as the *anarthas* of *anyābhilāṣa*, *karma*, *jñāna*, etc. remain in the heart.

In the first *kīrtana* of the *Upadeśa* section of *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks on the *jīvas'* *svarūpa* (innate constitutional form) and the *jīvas'* *samsāra-daśā* (entanglement in the material world). He says that those who don't do *yugala-bhajana* even after receiving the human form of life are great fools who have no destination to seek.

In his second *kīrtana*, he instructs the *jīvas* to abandon material lust (which is temporary) and instead serve Vṛndāvana's transcendental Cupid (Śrī Madana-Mohana).

In his third *kīrtana*, he advises the *jīvas* (who are always beset by doubts) to become free of all their doubts. In this regard, he has said that by always being in *sādhu-saṅga*, and by the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas, the *jīvas* will become free of all doubts that center on the existence of the soul. Thus, they will become fixed in eternal *bhajana*.

In the fourth *kīrtana* of *Upadeśa*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura educates everyone on the service of Sarveśvara Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He explains that Parabrahma Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *advaya-jñāna-parā-tattva* (the non-dual Absolute truth), and as all the gods and goddesses are His empowered representatives, they should be duly respected. *Bhajana* of Bhagavān Śrī Hari, the Lord of lords, should always be performed.

*mūlete siñcile jala, śākhā-pallavera bala,
śire vāri nāhe kāryakāra
hari-bhakti āche jāra, sarva-deva bandhu tāra,
bhakte sabe karena ādara*

By pouring water on the root of the tree, all the branches and leaves become strong and healthy. It is useless to try to pour the water on the top part of the tree only. Similarly, all the demigods are the dear friend of one who has actual devotion to Hari. Indeed, they all show great honor and respect to the devotee of the Lord.

By watering the root of a tree, the branches and sub-branches are nourished. But the tree will not be nourished if water is not poured on its roots and is rather poured on each of its leaves and branches. Similarly, the gods and goddesses are the dear friends of one who is always practicing *hari-bhakti*, because a devotee is always respected by everyone.

After disapproving the views of impersonalist followers (who rely on unsubstantiated logic) in his fifth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings the following words in his sixth *kīrtana*:

tarkera carama phala, bhayañkara halāhala

“O mind, all your logical arguments have resulted in the appearance of *halāhala*, a deadly form of poison.”

By such poison, the heart becomes very hard and the seed of the creeper of devotional service cannot grow in such a heart.

In his seventh *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura tells everyone to take exclusive shelter of *bhakti-yoga*. He has thus forbidden everyone to take shelter of other forms of *yoga*.

In the eighth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings, "O *jīva*! Why do you desire to merge into Brahma and become one with the Brahman effulgence?"

*bindu nāhi haya sindhu, vāmanā nā sparse indu,
reṇu ki bhūdhara-rūpa pāya?
lābha mātrā aparādha, paramārtha haya bādha,
sāyujya-badhira hāya hāya*

A drop of water certainly has the qualities of the ocean, but it is never equal to the ocean in quantity. A small dwarf cannot possibly touch the moon, despite his best intentions. And a handful of dust can never assume that it has become a mountain. Alas! Such a pitiful position is foolishly upheld by those who advocate the philosophy of merging into the Lord's bodily effulgence! The only profit from such doctrines is that it will make one become offensive towards the Lord, which will hinder one from attaining the supreme objective of devotion.

*yadi kabhu bhāgyodaye, sādhu-guru-samāśraye,
vṛndāvana sammukhete bhāya
krṣṇākṛṣṭa ha'ye tabe, kṣudra-rasa-anubhāve,
brahma chādi' parabrahme dhāya*

When someone's good fortune dawns, then, due to taking complete shelter of the virtuous devotees and spiritual masters, he will see Śrī Vṛndāvana shining gracefully before his very eyes. Upon becoming irresistibly attracted to Kṛṣṇa, he will run and chase after Him (Parabrahma). Thus he simply leaves aside the insignificant realization of merging with the Brahman effulgence, for he is completely overwhelmed by the slightest contact with Kṛṣṇa's transcendental mellites.

*śukādira su-jīvana, karo bhai ālocana,
e dāsa dhariche tava pāya*

My friends, discuss and deliberate on this: Make your life successful, just like the great sages Śukadeva, Nārada, Vyāsa etc. who all gave up *brāhmaṇa* realization by becoming attracted to Kṛṣṇa. Then this servant, Bhaktivinoda, will hold on to your feet.

In the ninth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, "What is the necessity of being proud of one's family lineage? A high birth or a low birth—the conception of belonging to a particular caste stems from identifying oneself with the material body (*dehātma-buddhi*)."

*yadi bhālo karma karo', svarga-bhoga atahpara,
tāte vipra cāṇḍāla samāna
narakeo dui jane, daṇḍa pā'be ek sane
janmāntare samāna vīdhāna*

If one performs pious actions, he attains the celestial pleasures available in heaven—the *brāhmaṇas* and *cāṇḍālas* have the same qualification to attain such pleasures. Both of them suffer equally in hell as well. Equal ruling is administered in their next births as well.

Service unto the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa can never be attained as long as a person identifies with his material body.

*tabe yadi kṛṣṇa-bhakti, sādha' tumi yathāśakti,
sonāya sohāgā pā'be sthāna
sārthaka haibe sūtra, sarva-lābha ihamūtra,
vinoda karibe stuti-gāṇa*

Although you are born in a *brāhmaṇa* family, if you serve Lord Kṛṣṇa as far as you are able, you will attain a great treasure. Your efforts will meet success. Thus, the *brāhmaṇa* thread draped across your chest will bear true value. All your efforts will bear transcendental fruits and you will attain everything in this life and the next. And Bhaktivinoda will sing your glories.

In the tenth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructs, "A person maybe very proud of his material learning, but except fleeting prestige, nothing else is achieved by such learning. Such learning cannot save one from gliding down into hell."

*ye vidyāra alocane, kṛṣṇa-rati sphure mane,
tāhāri ādara jāno' saba*

Everyone will appreciate the cultivation of that transcendental knowledge which awakens love and attachment for Kṛṣṇa within the mind.

*bhakti bādhā jāhā haite, se vidyāra mastakete,
padāghāta koro' akaitava
sarasvatī kṛṣṇa-priyā, kṛṣṇa-bhakti tāra hiyā
vinodera sei se vaibhava*

Step on the head of that education that presents obstacles in the cultivation of *bhakti*. Throw that education far away. Sarasvatī-devī, the presiding goddess of *parā-vidyā* (transcendental knowledge) is very dear to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, because she is a partial expansion of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Therefore, she is addressed as *vidyā-vadhu*. The life and soul of *vidyā-vadhu* is *śrī kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, and

kṛṣṇa-bhakti is the essence of her existence—it is her very heart. This very devotion is indeed the sanctifying grace of Bhaktivinoda.

In the eleventh *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, "O my brother, why are you so pleased by the beauty of the material body? This body is temporary. When Yamarāja comes, nothing will remain. The limbs will grow cold. The eyes will be still. How will this beauty remain when the flames of the funeral pyre will turn the body into ashes?"

*ye mukha saundarya hero, darpanete nirantar,
sva-śivāra haibe bhojana*

Again and again, you gaze at your beauty in the mirror. Where will you keep your favorite clothes and ornaments when the dogs and jackals eat your body?

"After burning your body at the cremation ground, your wife, children, friends, and kinsmen will all return to their homes. With whom have you a lasting relationship? Who has a lasting relationship with you? Please know this: The destruction of your body is inevitable and your beauty will not last. Therefore, renounce such bodily vanity and continuously chant Śrī Hari's names."

In the twelfth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains that having pride in one's material wealth will yield no fruit. Wealth, followers, and property are only related to the body. They will become useless when one departs from the body. Despite all forms of material knowledge and the dexterous efforts of an advising physician, nobody can save the body from perishing.

*dhane jadi prāṇa dita, dhani rājā nā marita,
dharāmara haite rāvaṇa*

If wealth had the power to prolong life, then a wealthy king would never have to die. The demon named Rāvaṇa also thought that he possessed deathlessness, until he was finally killed by Lord Rāma.

Thus we see that no one has ever been able to protect and keep his body with any amount of money, for no one can prevent his body from dying. Therefore what is the use of constantly trying to endeavor for wealth?

*yadi thāke bahu dhana, nije ha'be akiñcana,
vaiṣṇavera karo upakāra
jīve dayā anukṣaṇa, rādhā-kṛṣṇa-ārādhana,
karo sadā ha'ye sadācāra*

If you have any wealth, then just make yourself lowly and humble and use that wealth to do something beneficial for the service of the Vaiṣṇavas, *bhaktas*, and Vrajavāsīs. Constantly showing compassion to all souls, worship Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and always be saintly.

While staying at one's home, an individual works very hard to procure the objects of his enjoyment. But these objects are easily available to one who dons the appearance of a *sannyāsī*. Therefore, many people wish to dress themselves up as *sannyāsīs* in an immature state. They also display excessive renunciation to accrue material prestige, which is easily available in the association of the *sādhus*. They lessen their food intake or refrain

from eating completely. They also wear worn and torn clothes, and have many matted locks of hair. Although they don't have the required qualification, they still dress themselves up as *sannyāsīs*, or renunciants, because of being fuelled by the greed of acquiring material prestige.

Instructing such ill-motivated individuals, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has spoken the following words in his thirteenth *kīrtana* "Oh brother! Rather than fixing your attention on how you dress, drink the nectar of service unto Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet and try to make your heart spotlessly clean. Only make such arrangements by which the maintenance of your life will be easily carried out, and ensure that no obstacles present themselves in the practice of your *bhakti*."

*anāyāse jāhā pāo, tāhe tuṣṭa haye jāo,
āḍambare nā karo prayāsa*

Happily accept whatever comes easily. Don't try to make an ostentatious display of your opulence.

*aguru candana nāi, mr̄ttikā-tilaka bhāī,
hārera badale dharo mālā
ei rūpe āśā-pāśa, sukhādira kuvilāsa,
kharvi chāda samsārera jvālā*

If you don't have sandalwood pulp scented with perfume, then use clay to mark your forehead with *tilaka*. Instead of wearing pearl studded necklaces, adorn yourself with a *tulasī-mālā*. In this way, turn away from material hankерings, and cut the ropes of material desires. Liberate yourself from the blazing fire of repeated birth and death.

After artificially renouncing the objects of material enjoyment, a person should not resort to displaying a pretentious form of renunciation. He will never be liberated from *samsara* even if he continues to offer his respect to such duplicitous practices. Alas! His pride and conceit will swell by such actions.

It is not appropriate to think, "Only one who has accepted *sannyasa* is an elevated devotee." Such a non-devotional conception is only fostered by conditioned souls who hanker for material fame and adoration. Therefore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says:

*tumi to' caitanya-dāsa, hari-bhakti tava āśa,
āśramera linge kivā phala?*

In truth, you are an eternal servant of Lord Caitanya, and you need only desire *hari-bhakti*. What is the use of only donning the external signs of your *āśrama* (spiritual order)?

"I humbly request you to abandon the desire for material prestige and remain in *sādhu-saṅga* always. Thus, in the association of the *sādhus*, you should loudly sing of the qualities of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa."

Although Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has forbidden the devotees to practice artificial renunciation, one should not infer that by such words he has told everyone to remain attached to their homes. On one hand, he has instructed everyone to abandon any excessive attachment or pride they may have to their caste or spiritual order. On the other hand, he has also instructed everyone to refrain from being excessively attached to one's home and hearth. Therefore, importance should not be placed on an individual's *āśrama* or his external appearance. Rather, only

his inner *bhakti-niṣṭhā* holds true value. Accepting that *āśrama*, which is conducive to his practice of devotion, a devotee should accordingly engage in non-duplicitous *bhajana*. Indeed, such a devotee is most exalted among everyone.

To always remain under guidance is the pre-eminent principle of *vaiṣṇava-dharma*. Wherever there is the desire for independence, there is an underlying desire for material enjoyment. In the fourteenth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains that to wander in the pilgrimage places while having desires for enjoyment (*bhukti*) and liberation (*mukti*) is also another form of *anyābhilāṣā* (to nourish extraneous desires). Such travel to the *tīrthas* only constitutes fruitless labor. The mind is not calmed by such aimless wandering. The wish-fulfilling tree of auspiciousness will not yield any fruits if there is *anyābhilāṣā*.

The real fruit of traveling to the pilgrimage places is to receive the association of the *sādhus* who reside in these *tīrthas*. Therefore, everyone should go to the *tīrthas* with the intention of receiving *sādhu-saṅga*, because it is only by the association of the *sādhus* that one will know how to engage in Kṛṣṇa's *bhajana*. The place where *bhagavad-bhaktas* reside is indeed a pilgrimage place. Therefore, the *sādhaka* should continuously be in the association of the *sādhus*.

je tīrthe vaiṣṇava nāi, se tīrthe nāhi jāi,
 ki lābha hātiyā dūra-deśa
 yathāya vaiṣṇava-gaṇa, sei sthāna uṛṇdāvana,
 sei sthāne ānanda aśeṣa

You should not go to a pilgrimage place that is devoid of Vaisnavas and their association. What is the use of going

there? A place where Vaiṣṇavas reside is indeed Vṛndāvana. Eternal bliss is continuously present in such a place.

*kṛṣṇa-bhakti jei sthāne, mukti dāsī seikhāne,
salila tathāya mandākini
giri tathā govardhana, bhūmi tathā vṛndāvana,
āvirbhūtā āpani hlādinī*

Liberation personified is herself the humble maidservant of that place which is surcharged with devotion to Kṛṣṇa. All the water at that place is the celestial Ganges, every hill there is Giri-Govardhana, and the very earth is indeed Vṛndāvana. The Lord's pleasure-potency, that is, *Hlādinī-sakti* Herself manifests in such a place.

*vinoda kahiche bhāi, bhramiyā ki phal pāi,
vaiṣṇava-sevana mora vrata*

While instructing his mind, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has said, "Oh brother! What is the use of aimlessly wandering? My vow is to serve the Vaiṣṇavas with firm resolution and untiring endeavor.

In the fifteenth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura states that the devotees who desire *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* should not follow or observe the vows or austerities that yield enjoyment and liberation, because observance of such vows and austerities don't lead to the awakening of the soul's innate propensity. If vows and austerities impede one's *bhakti*, then they should be renounced. If not, one may obtain the fruit of observing many vows and austerities, but the fruit of *bhakti* will not be had.

*kintu bheve dekho bhai, tapasyāra kāja nāi,
 yadi hari ārādhita hana
 bhakti yadi nā phalila, tapasyāra tuccha phala,
 vaisnava na laya kadācana*

My dear brother! Consider this: There is no need to perform any austerities when Śrī Hari's service is easily available. If devotional service does not manifest as the result of some type of austerity, then the insignificant result of that austerity will never be accepted by a true Vaiṣṇava at any time.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has aimed his advice for those who desire auspiciousness for themselves. Although a person may be ready to do what is necessary for the welfare of his soul, he will still have some faith in certain vows and austerities, because he thinks of these means as a way of being distanced from the desire to sin.

In the sixteenth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructs all the devotees, saying they should renounce the association of the non-devotee *dharmaqvajis* (those who claim to be following *dharma* but are not really doing so) and only become attached to the simple hearted devotees. The fruits of *bhakti* will only be had in the association of the *bhaktas*. The soul can never achieve his auspiciousness in the association of hypocrites. Such hypocrites only consider themselves to be *sādhus* and an ignorant person (because of his misfortune) becomes a victim to the ploys of such hypocrites.

In his seventeenth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura disapproves of the practice of doing *bhajana* independently. Such

artificial display is devoid of *anugatya* (or guidance) of *sāstra* and of the *āmnāya-vidhi* (instructions of the previous *ācāryas*).

Some unfortunate people become bewildered by the word jugglery of independent tricksters and become prone to following certain practices that are not in line with the *sampradāya*. Thus, they renounce their adherence towards the teachings given by their *guru*, the previous *ācāryas* (*mahājanas*), and the scriptures. They then become the slaves of the whims and speculations of their mind, and then become degraded because of such unscrupulous intelligence. They will start to find fault in the *sampradāya* and exhibit hostility towards accepting initiation in a *sat-sampradāya*. They stop wearing neck beads, and to add to their woes, they also stop adorning their foreheads with *tilaka*. And after all that, they start advocating the practices of a philosophy they have concocted. They will say, "A wrongdoer wears *tilaka*, *mālā*, and bears the signs of initiation that are not proper. These signs only signify his fallacy."

In reality, the cause of such actions is either their fear of certain people, their non-devotional sentiments towards Bhakti-devī herself, or their desire to gather the support of the general public. To aid their cause, they propagate the amalgamation of the spiritual (*cit*) and the material (*acit*). They find fault in the *sat-sampradāyas* and try promulgating the ideas of a philosophy they contrived themselves.

In the eighteenth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks on *chāyā* and *pratibimba bhaktyābhāsa* (a shadow and reflection of pure devotion). Such a semblance of devotion is caused because of artificial practice and a non-aligned nature. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains that such forms of devotion can never be called

pure devotion. The *prākṛta-sahajiyās* (mundane imitationists) display many so-called ecstatic symptoms of devotion with the intention of collecting wealth, women, prestige, and adoration. Such a hypocritical display is an offense at the lotus feet of Bhakti-devī. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has spoken the following words in this regard:

*abhyāsiyā aśrupāta, lampha jhampha akasmāt,
mūrcchā-prāya thākaha paḍiyā
e loka vañcīte raṅga, pracāriyā asat-saṅga,
kāminī-kāñcana labha giyā*
*nā mānile su-bhajana, sādhu-saṅge saṅkīrtana,
nā karile nirjane smaraṇa
nā uṭhiyā vṛkṣopari, ṭānāṭāni phala dhari,
duṣṭa-phala karile arjana*
*akaitava kṛṣṇa-prema, jena su-vimala hema,
ei phala nṛloke durlabha
kaitave vañcanā-mātrā, hao āge yogya-pātra,
tabe prema haibe sulabha*

O mind! You are well-practiced in artificially shedding tears and in suddenly leaping here and there. You fall on the ground and pretend to be unconscious in ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa. You perform such mischievous pranks only to cheat the innocent public and thereby broadcast and popularize your own wicked association. You only wish to attract women and money by your duplicitous endeavors.

O mind, you neglect the best and most auspicious process of worshiping Kṛṣṇa, namely the congregational chanting of His holy names in the association of purified

devotees. And you don't even bother to try to remember Him in a lonely place. This is just like trying to pick fruits forcibly from a tree by jumping at them from the ground. Instead of climbing the tree to properly pick the sweet, ripened fruits from the top of the tree, you will simply get the sour, unripe fruits by such whimsical jumping.

Ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa which is completely free from the propensity to cheat is just like spotless pure gold, but the fruits of such pure love are rarely found in this world. However, my dear mind, your so-called love is simply an imitation. True transcendental love will become very easily obtainable for you when you make yourself qualified in the truest sense.

At the end of this *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda shows the difference between *kāma* (which means to gratify one's senses), and *prema* (which means to gratify Kṛṣṇa's senses).

In the nineteenth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks on how mundane lust (whose resting place is the material body) is always centered on its concomitant sense objects and the pleasures they provide. The *jīva's svarūpa-dharma, prema* (innate love) that is only directed towards Śrī Hari, remains covered by such lust. Therefore, it is the duty of the *jīva* to dispel lust and awaken *prema* for Śrī Hari. By gradual development of *bhakti*, the stages of *śraddhā* (awakening of faith), *sādhu-saṅga* (association of a higher class devotee), *bhajana-kriyā* (to practice *bhajana* in such *sādhu-saṅga*), *anartha-nivṛtti* (the removal of unwanted tendencies), *niṣṭhā* (unwavering faith), *ruci* (transcendental taste), *āsakti* (attachment for *bhajana*, and *bhajanīya*, who is the object of *bhajana*), *bhāva* (preliminary stage of *prema*), and *prema*

(love of God) appear. A person who avoids *śraddhā*, *sādhusāṅga*, *bhajana-kriyā*, and the following stages, and who displays duplicitous symptoms of love of God (which are likened to a dramatic performance), is a lusty servant of his senses.

*nāṭakābhinaya prāya, sakapaṭa prema bhāya
tāhe mātrā indriya-santoṣa
indriya-toṣana chāra, sadā karo' parihāra,
chāḍo bhāī aparādha-doṣa*

Your cheating so-called "spiritual love" is only the pretending of an expert actor. It is only sense gratification. Sense gratification is worthless like a pile of ashes. My dear brother mind, always reject such degraded, contemptible sense gratification, casting out this grave offense to the Lord.

UPALABDHI—THE SECOND BRANCH OF KALYĀNA-KALPATARU
The name of *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*'s second branch is *Upalabdhī*. *Upalabdhī* is characterized by various symptoms.

- (1) *Anutāpa-lakṣana upalabdhī*
- (2) *Nirveda-lakṣana upalabdhī*
- (3) *Sambandha-vijñāna-lakṣana upalabdhī*
- (4) *Abhideya-vijñāna-lakṣana upalabdhī*
- (5) *Prayojana-vijñāna-lakṣana upalabdhī*

(1) Anutāpa-lakṣana upalabdhī

There are five *kīrtanas* in *Anutāpa-lakṣana upalabdhī*. In the first *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura draws a picture on how a *jīva*, despite receiving the rarely obtained human form of life, never performs *hari-bhajana*. Rather, the *jīva* becomes a servant of the

illusory energy, and spends the allotted time of his life like how a horse, donkey, or other animals do. When the semblance of auspiciousness arises, feelings of repentance appear in the *jīva*'s heart. A picture of such repentance has also been drawn in this *kīrtana*.

After spending time in the womb of one's mother, the *jīva* becomes busy in playing and fulfilling different obligations when he grows up and becomes a youth. And later, much time is spent dealing with disease and being remorseful. As a result, the *jīva* realizes how he has completely wasted the time of his life and he laments in great anxiety. Being endowed with good intelligence, the *jīva* then searches for eternal auspiciousness. Seeing no other recourse, the *jīva* calls out plaintively:

*sāmarthyā thākite kāya, hari nā bhajinu hāya,
āsanna kālete kibā kari?
dhik mor e jivane, nā sādhinu nitya-dhane,
mitra chāḍi' bhajilāma ari*

Alas! I have passed this life without ever worshiping the Supreme Lord Hari even when I was young and healthy. Being bereft of the power to hold onto this body, what will I do now that the final moment is approaching? Fie on my life! I never took advantage of the actual eternal treasure. Instead, I have abandoned my real friend (Hari), only to worship my enemy (this miserable material energy).

In the second *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks on how the association of those who are averse to serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa, has such a detrimental influence on one's state of mind. The only fruit that is obtained from association with those who

are *anyābhilāṣa* is aversion to the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Yet, such aversion is veiled and made to look as refined civilization.

*suvarṇa kariyā tyāga, tuccha loṣṭre anurāga
durbhāgāra ei ta' lakṣaṇa
krṣṇetar saṅga kari', sādhu-jane parihari',
mada-garve kātānu jīvana
bhakti-mudrā-daraśane, hāsyā karitāma mane,
bātulatā baliyā tāhāya
je sabhyatā śreṣṭha gaṇi', hārāinu cintāmaṇi,
šeṣe tāhā rahila kothāya?*

Rejecting gold, I fell in love with clumps of earth. That was my misfortune. Rejecting the saintly devotees, I associated with non-devotees. I have thus passed my life in passion and pride. Seeing someone bearing the signs of devotion to the Lord, I would laugh in my heart. "That is craziness," I would say. Thinking I had already attained the company of the most cultured and civilized people, I rejected a *cintāmaṇi* jewel. Where am I now?

In the third *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura discusses how the *jīva* endeavors in various ways to obtain the happiness of heaven. The *jīva* fasts and undergoes various forms of austerities. The body is placed into many difficulties. While following *varṇāśrama-dharma*, the *jīva* also prays to various demigods and goddesses. He studies many scriptures and tries to follow the strict discipline that the *śāstras* delineate, yet the final fruit that the *jīva* obtains doesn't yield any auspiciousness for the soul. The *jīvas*'s endeavors have been likened to a spider

that gets entangled in its own web. Indeed, such endeavors are like pouring oblations of ghee into dry ashes. At the end of the *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks on how the *jīva* sincerely laments his pitiful condition after being in *sādhu-saṅga*:

*dhik mora e jīvane, dhik mora dhana-jane,
dhik mora varṇa-abhimāna
dhik mora kula-māne, dhik śāstra adhyayane,
hari-bhakti nā pāilo sthāna*

Fie on my life! Fie on my wealth and followers! Fie on my pride of caste! Fie on my family prestige! Fie on my study of scripture, for I did not attain devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa!

In the fourth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains how the *jīva* (upon receiving *sādhu-saṅga*) gets rid of bodily attachment. Such a condition is even sought by the impersonalists.

*“āmi brahma ekamātra”, e juālāya dahe gātra,
ihāra upāya kibā bhāi?
vikāra je chilo bhālo, auṣadha jañjāl hala,
auṣadha-auṣadha kothā pāī?*

By thinking “I am only spirit”, one certainly burns up any attachment to the material body. But is that the real final remedy, Oh mind, my dear brother? Certainly it is good that the disturbance of material tribulations has been relieved, but the so-called “medicine” of the Māyāvāda philosophy has now become an unwanted burden, another trouble all over again. So now tell me, where will you get the medicine which will cure this “medicine”?

In the fifth *kīrtana*, Bhaktivinoda Thākura describes how the *jīva* forgets *vaikuṇṭha-tattva* because of the absence of *sādhusāṅga*. As the *jīva* becomes completely absorbed in material enjoyment, he thinks of himself as the supreme enjoyer. "This is mine; that is mine"—such conceptions constantly disturbs his mind, and he is continuously scorched by the five types of miseries:

- (1) *avidyā* (ignorance that stems from forgetting the Lord).
- (2) *asmitā* (false ego that stems from directing the thoughts away from the Lord).
- (3) *abhinivesa* (absorption in the material objects, and attachments of this world).
- (4) *rāga* (attachment to objects that are separate from Kṛṣṇa that invoke misdirected love).
- (5) *dveśa* (aversion, which stems from the struggle to purify the conditioned state of the soul).

*e roga-śamanopāya, anveśiyā hāya hāya
mile vaidya sadya yamopama
āmi brahma māyā-bhrama' ei auśadhera krama,
deki' cintā hailo viṣama*

Being scorched by these five miseries, the *jīva* wails in pain and searches for a doctor who can provide a pertinent panacea. But the doctor he meets is like death personified himself (Yamarāja). While speaking of the cure, the doctor has given the prescription, "I am Brahma, and *māyā* is false." He has told me to chant this *mantra* repeatedly. He has also told me to repeatedly chant and listen to the axiom, *aham brahmāsmi*. But now when I see the result of this so-called medicine, I feel an unbearable anxiety in my conscience.

When the *jīva* sees that this medicine is acting like poison, he calls out, "auṣadha auṣadha kothā pāya?" He cries out, "Where will I get the medicine that will cure the poisonous effects of this 'medicine'?" Thinking as such, the *jīva* becomes very disturbed and says:

*ek to' rogera kaṣṭa, yamopama vaidya bhrāṣṭa,
e yantraṇā kise jāye mora*

On one side, I feel great difficulty and grief from these five material miseries. On the other side is the corrupt doctor of impersonalism who is like death personified. How will I escape my troubles?

A medicine that destroys the disease and the diseased cannot be called a medicine. To free himself from the clutches of the witch of *māyā* and to be relieved from the poisonous effects of *Māyāvāda*, the distressed practitioner should place himself under the expert care of a devotee physician and intently meditate on the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Thus, he should continuously drink the nectar of Śrī Hari's names. Only then is it possible to escape from these horrible calamities.

(2) *Nirveda-lakṣana upalabdhī*

There are five *kīrtanas* in *Nirveda-lakṣana upalabdhī*. In his first *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura states that when a *jīva* sincerely engages in *sādhu-saṅga*, he will naturally develop feelings of renunciation towards *samsāra*, that is, the cycle of birth, death, disease, and lamentation. He will then start to realize that wealth, followers, and family members will never be by his side eternally.

This world is temporary, where pure, unadulterated happiness is not found, and that which is seen as happiness is actually a source of many miseries. While instructing his mind, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has sung the following words:

*se sukhera tare tabe, keno māyā-dāsa habe,
hārāibe paramārtha-dhana*

O mind! If you become the slave of *māyā* then you only rob yourself of the eternal treasure waiting for you, the supreme goal of life.

In the second *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks on how the desire for sense gratification and material ambition stunt the spiritual growth of the *jīva*. He also speaks on how the *jīva* should remain untouched by the desire for material enjoyment and liberation, for the happiness they provide is utterly insignificant. He teaches that the actions of sense enjoyment, carried out by the material body, only bring about fleeting pleasure, and concludes his *kīrtana* by describing the eternal nature of *bhagavad-bhakti* and how essential it is for everyone to start practicing such *bhagavad-bhakti*.

*pārthiva unnati jata, śeṣe avanati taṭa,
śānta hao mora vakya dharo*

O mind, don't you know that as much as one gets elevated to the high position of a king, to that same degree he meets his downfall? Please be peaceful and consider my words.

Material desires are endless. Anyone who walks on the path of fulfilling them will soon realize how these desires are only

increasing relentlessly, for they can never be placated. And such desires cannot decide for themselves what is temporary or eternal. In reality, the path of fulfilling one's desires is beset by many thorns of disappointment.

*ataeva āśā-pāśa, jāhe haya sarva-nāśa,
hrdaya haite rakha dure
akiñcana-bhāva la'ye, caitanya-caraṇāśraye,
vāsa kara sadā Śāntipure*

O mind, when you are caught in the trap of desires, everything is lost. Keep all mundane desires far away from your heart. Taking on the mood and behavior of a humble servant under the shelter of Lord Caitanya's lotus feet, you should thus always reside in Śāntipura, that place which is pervaded with everlasting transcendental peace.

In the third *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the best of the followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, instructs his mind to follow the practices of *uttamā-bhakti*, the most sublime form of pure devotion as described by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī himself.

Rūpa Gosvāmī told his mind, "The desire for enjoyment and liberation is like a witch. Among these two, the desire for liberation is even more fearsome."

While describing the *svarūpa* (innate nature) of *bhoga*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has spoken the following words:

*indriya-tarpaṇa vai, bhoge āra sukha kai
seo sukha abhāva-purāṇa
je sukhete āche bhaya, tāke sukha balā naya
take duḥkha bale' vijñā-jana*

I say that in material sense pleasures the senses become appeased, but aside from that, there is no real pleasure. That pleasure is only pacifying an itch. It is a fearful pleasure. The wise do not call this sense-appeasement "pleasure." They call it "suffering."

Happiness that includes elements of fear can never really be called happiness. An intelligent person will address such a form of happiness as fear.

*śāstre phala-śruti jata, sei lobhe kata śata
mūḍha-jana bhoga prati dhāya
se-saba kaitava jāni', chādiyā vaiṣṇava-jñānī
mukhya-phala krṣṇa-rati pāya*

How many hundreds of fools, hearing the scriptures' descriptions, run after these sense pleasures? Knowing them to be only a trick, a wise Vaiṣṇava renounces them. He strives to attain love for Lord Kṛṣṇa, the most valuable of attainments.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura then describes the *svarūpa* of *mukti*:

*mukti-vāñcā duṣṭa ati, naṣṭa kare śiṣṭa-mati,
mukti-spṛhā kaitava-pradhāna
tāhā je chādite nāre, māyā nāhi chāde tāre,
tāra yatna nahe phalavān*

The desire for impersonal liberation is very wicked. It destroys all good thoughts. The desire for impersonal liberation is the most devious of tricks. As long as one does not give up that desire, *māyā* will not leave him alone. The impersonalist will struggle mightily, but he will never reach his goal.

ataeva sprhā-dvaya, chādi śodha e hṛdāya,
nāhi rākho kāmera vāsanā
bhoga-mokṣa nāhi cāi, śrī-kṛṣṇa-caraṇa pāi,
vinodera ei to' sādhana

Therefore, my dear mind, just reject these desires for *bhukti* and *mukti*, and cleanse this heart; don't keep these insignificant desires there. Bhaktivinoda does not want material enjoyment or liberation at all, but instead practices proper devotional service to obtain the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, "O mind! Except fostering the desire to attain the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, I will not yield to any desire for *bhukti* or *mukti*—this is my *sādhana*."

The fourth *kīrtana* is:

durlabha mānava-janma labhiyā samsāre
kṛṣṇa nā bhajinu-duhkha kahiba kāhāre

After attaining a rare human birth in this world, I still did not worship Lord Kṛṣṇa. To whom will I tell my sufferings?

In this *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks on the impermanence of one's body, home, wife, and children. He also speaks on how a conditioned soul tirelessly endeavors to fulfill his obligations of *samsāra*. He relates the miseries of such conditioned souls in a very heart-touching way. At the end of the *kīrtana*, he says:

ataeva māyā-moha chādi' buddhimān
nitya-tattva kṛṣṇa-bhakti karuṇā sandhāna

Therefore, those who are intelligent give up their infatuation with illusion and pursue the eternal truth of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*.

In the fifth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura teaches that, "The desire to always please the body is completely unfavorable to *hari-bhajana*. The material eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin are always looking for their concomitant sense objects. Such actions of the senses greatly obstruct the *jīva* in tending to the betterment of his conscious self. Only by the mercy of Śrī Guru and Vaiṣṇavas, will the *jīva* become inclined to tend to his eternal conscious self. By the medium of *sahaja-samādhi-yoga*², the material body can be placed under the guidance of the *siddha-deha* (the perfected self). As a result, the material body will no longer produce any impediments in attaining *paramārtha* (transcendence).

2 The definition of *sahaja-samādhi*—When the *ātma* takes shelter of *sahaja-samādhi*, the gradual realization of *ātma-bodhā* (knowledge of one's self) and the revived relationship between the *ātma* and Paramātmā (which was previously forgotten owing to the *jīva*'s conditioned existence) is had. Realization of *āśraya-bodhā* (knowledge of the abode of devotion i.e. Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī) and the relationship between the sheltered (*āśrita*) and the abode of devotion is also had. Realization of the qualities, services, and inherent beauty of the *āśraya* is also had. Realization of the relationship among different servants of the eternal realm is also had. Realization of the servants' worshipable deities is also had. Realization of the pastimes between the servants, and the ultimate abode of devotion is also had. Realization of the potency of the *āśraya* is then had. And then, realization of the sheltered servants' advancement i.e. those under the care of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī Herself is had. And then, the realization of the downfall of those who seek shelter of the external feature of the Lord's *sakti* is had.

The realization of the *svarūpa-brahma* (mistaken conception of the self) of the conditioned *jīvas* is also had. And then, realization of the upliftment of the conditioned souls (upon being under the shelter of the *āśraya*) is had. Ultimately, realization of how the *svarūpa* (innate constitutional form) of such conditioned souls manifests. Thus, the realization of many such inconceivable *tattvas* is had. (*Śrī Kṛṣṇa-saṁhitā*)

(3) *Sambandha-abhideya-prayojana-vijñāna-lakṣana upalabdhi*

There are four *kīrtanas* in *Sambandha-abhideya-prayojana-vijñāna-lakṣana*. *Sambandha*, *abhideya*, and *prayojana*—these three *tattvas* are *advaya* (one without a second). In these four *kīrtanas* of *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura delineates the *upalabdhi* of these three *tattvas*. In the first *kīrtana*, while instructing his mind, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says:

*cid-dhāma-bhāskara kṛṣṇa, tāñra jyotirgata
 ananta citkaṇa jīva tiṣṭhe avirata
 sei jīva prema-dharmī, kṛṣṇa-gata-prāṇa
 sadā kṛṣṇākṛṣṭa, bhakti-sudhā kare' pāna
 nānā-bhāva-miśrita piyā dāsy-a-rasa
 kṛṣṇera ananta-guṇe sadā thāke vaśa
 kṛṣṇa mātā, kṛṣṇa pitā, kṛṣṇa sakhā, pati
 ei saba bhinna-bhāve kṛṣṇe kare rati*

Lord Kṛṣṇa is the effulgent sun of the spiritual world. The limitless rays of light always emanating from Him are the individual spirit souls. These *jīva* souls are by their very nature full of pure, ecstatic love and are all the dearly beloveds of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Being always attracted to Kṛṣṇa, they continuously drink the ambrosial nectar of devotion.

They constantly drink the nectar of service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, a nectar mixed with different kinds of ecstatic love. Thus, they are overwhelmed by Lord Kṛṣṇa's limitless transcendental qualities. Kṛṣṇa is their mother. Kṛṣṇa is their father. Kṛṣṇa is their friend and husband. Kṛṣṇa manifests all these different kinds of loving relationships with them.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura then says, "O mind, a *niṣkiñcana sādhu* (whose only possession is the wealth of *prema* for Kṛṣṇa) is always far from all kinds of material enjoyment and mystic prowess. He abandons any disposition of *rāga* (attachment for the objects of sense gratification) or *dveṣa* (hatred or aversion to unpleasant, disagreeable or adverse situations). Being invested with *yukta-vairāgya* (feasible renunciation), he is always absorbed in *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*. The *sādhus* are never in need of adorning themselves with external signs of devotion. They are always neutral, and detached:

*ataeva liṅga-hīna sadā sādhu-jana
dvandvātīta ha'ye karena śrī-kṛṣṇa-bhajana
jñānera prayāse kāla nā kari' yāpana
bhakti-bale nitya-jñāna karena sādhana
yathā tathā vāsa kari', je se vastra pari'
sulabdhā-bhojana-dvārā deha rakṣā kari'
kṛṣṇa-bhakta kṛṣṇa-sevā-ānande mātiyā
sadā kṛṣṇa-prema-rase phirena gahiyā*

Therefore, rejecting everything else and freed from the dualities of this world, the devotees always worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The devotees do not struggle to attain knowledge. By the power of devotional service, they attain eternal knowledge. They wear clothing that is easily attained and also maintain the body with food that is easily attained. Thus, the devotees of Kṛṣṇa, being overwhelmingly absorbed in the joy of serving Kṛṣṇa, always swim in the nectar of love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

After describing the unprecedented glories of *vaiṣṇava-tattva* in the second *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says:

*yadi cāha nityānanda pravāha sevite
avirata, guru-pādaśrāya karo' jīva
nīrasa bhajana samudaya parihari
brahma-cintā ādi jata, sadā sādha' rati,
kusumita vṛṇdāvane śrī-rāsa-maṇḍale
puruṣatva-ahaṅkāra nitānta durbala
tava! tumi śuddha-jīva! āsvādya svajana,
śrī-rādhāra nitya-sakhī! parānanda-rasa
anubhavi! māyā-bhoga tomāra patana*

O soul, if you wish to serve the eternal and blissful Supreme Lord, then take shelter of a bona fide spiritual master. You should reject all types of dry worship which is devoid of appreciation for higher sentiments. While reflecting deeply on the nature of the Absolute, you should endeavor to lovingly worship the circle of the divine Rāsa Dance in flower-filled Vṛṇdāvana (the *rāsa-maṇḍala*).

My friend, your false egoistic conception of being a male is extremely feeble, for you are actually a pure spirit soul! And your real family comprises of the eternal maidservants of Śrī Rādhikā! Please taste the nectar of transcendental bliss. The pleasures of *māyā* are your fall-down.

In the third *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura states that the material world is a reflection of the spiritual world:

vaikuṇṭha-nilaye jei aprākṛta rati
 sumadhura mahābāvāvadhi
 tāra tuccha anukṛti puruṣa-prakṛti
 saṅga-sukha-saṅklesa jaladhi
 aprākṛta siddha-deha kariyā āśraya
 sahaja-samādhi yoga bale
 sādhaka prakṛti-bhāve śrī-nanda-tanaya
 bhajena sarvadā kautuhale

In the abode of Vaikuṇṭha, the transcendental love culminates into the highest limit of *mahābhāva* (the highest mood of loving service to Kṛṣṇa). In contrast, the insignificant imitative relationship between male and female in this world and the resultant so-called pleasure of their association together, is simply an ocean of complete misery.

Taking refuge in a transcendently perfect *siddha-deha*, or spiritual body, on the strength of his union with his own natural *saṁādhi*, the aspirant eternally worships the Son of Nanda Mahārāja in the mood and emotions like that of a *gopī*.

By spending one's entire life in the service of household life (which may even be unfavorable), the entire duration of youth, intelligence, and strength is lost. After spending one's entire time in *samsāra*, the conditioned soul becomes invalid. Thus, with the intention of enjoying one's pension, the conditioned soul then expresses the artificial desire to engage in *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*. In the fourth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura expresses how such a pretentious desire is merely deception of the self:

*jīvana-samāpti-kāle karibo bhajana,
ebe kari gṛha-sukha'
kakhana e kathā nāhi bale vijñā-jana,
e deha patanonmukha*

Because he knows this body's collapse is always imminent, a wise person will never say, "At the moment of my death I will worship the Lord. For now I will enjoy a householder's happiness."

*ajī vā śateka varṣe avaśya maraṇa,
niścinta nā thāka bhāi
jata sīghra pāra, bhaja śrī-krṣṇa-caraṇa
jīvanera thika nāi*

Death must come, either now or in a hundred years. O my brothers, please don't be so free of worries. At once worship Lord Kṛṣṇa's feet. Nothing is certain in this life.

*samsāra nirvāha kari' jaba āmi vṛndāvana
rṇa-traya śodhivāre karitechi suyatana*

One thinks: "After spending my worldly life I shall go to Vṛndāvana, but for now I will endeavor very hard to purify myself of the three debts."

*e āśāya nāhi prayojana
emana durāśā vaśe, jābe prāṇa avaśeṣe,
nā haibe dīnabandhu-caraṇa-sevana*

This type of idea is not the ultimate goal of life. By the influence of such a whimsical desire, your life will depart in the end without your ever having worshiped the lotus feet of Dīnabandhu, the dear most Friend of the fallen.

*yadi sumāngala cāo, sadā krṣṇa-nāma gāo,
gṛhe thāko, vane thāko, ithe tarka akāraṇa*

If you want your topmost auspiciousness, then just always sing the name of Kṛṣṇa whether you live at home or in the forest. All these other arguments described here are simply aimless excuses.

UCCHĀVĀSA—THE THIRD BRANCH OF KALYĀNA-KALPATARU
In *Ucchāvāsa*, the third branch of *Kalyāna-kalpataru*, there is a confluence of the moods of *dainyamayī* (humble entreaties), *lālasamayī* (*kīrtanas* filled with moods of longing), and *vijñapti* (*kīrtanas* stating one's submission).

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has included five *kīrtanas* in the *dainyamayī* prayers, twelve *kīrtanas* in the *lālasamayī* prayers, and has composed four *kīrtanas* for the *vijñapti* prayers. Thus, *Ucchāvāsa* has twenty-one *kīrtanas*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Ucchāvāsa kīrtanas* are very similar to Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura's *Prārthanā* prayers—they are all simple prayers expressing the distressful longings of a pure devotee. By studying and singing these *kīrtanas*, the door of the temple of *sevā*, which has been closed since many lives, will open. These *kīrtanas* will cleanse the *Guṇḍīcā* of one's heart and make it an effulgent abode for Bhakti-devī.

(1) *Dainyamayī Prārthanā*

Kabe śrī caitanya more karibena dayā and *Āmi to durjana ati sadā durācāra* are the first two *kīrtanas* of *Dainyamayī Prārthanā*. In these two *kīrtanas*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructs the *jīvas* to tearfully surrender to the Vaiṣṇavas in the following way:

*gala-vastra kṛtāñjali vaiṣṇava-nikāte
dante tṛṇa kori' dādāibo niṣkapate*

With a cloth around my neck, my hands folded, and a straw between my teeth, I shall stand before the Vaiṣṇavas, free of duplicity.

He also says that in response to the Vaiṣṇavas' prayers, it is inevitable that the *sādhaka* will be the recipient of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's merciful glance. He gives us this unparalleled assurance.

*vaiṣṇavera āvedane kṛṣṇa dayāmaya
e heno pāmara prati ha'bena sadaya*

In response to the Vaiṣṇavas' prayers, the all-merciful Śrī Kṛṣṇa will become compassionate upon this wicked person.

He inspires the *jīvas* to non-dupliciously admit their incapability to Śrī Hari, Guru, and Vaiṣṇavas, who are decorated with the quality of being *patita-pāvana* (saviors of the fallen).

*kāñdiyā kāñdiyā bale' e patita chāra
patita-pāvana nāma prasiddha tomāra*

Weeping and weeping, this fallen and most contemptible person says: "Dear Lord, all I know is that Your most celebrated name is *patita-pāvana*, the deliverer of the fallen".

In his third *kīrtana*, *Bhavārnave pode mora ākula parāṇa*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructs the *jīvas* to take shelter of the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Jāhnavā-devī, who is Śrī Nityānanda-śakti and *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-guru*. By the shelter of her lotus feet, the *jīvas* can cross over this fearsome ocean of lust, which is filled

with the sharks and crocodiles of sense gratification and other terrible creatures. Thus, he instructs the *jivas* to call out to Śrīmatī Jāhnavā-devī with utmost longing and sincerity.

Viṣaya-vāsanā rūpa cittera vikāra is the fourth *kīrtana*, in which Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura prays to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī to bestow his mercy upon him and empower his heart with *yukta-vairāgya*. He prays to Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī to offer him at the lotus feet of Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu after being freed from the desire to engage in sense gratification. After that, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura prays to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī in the following way:

*śrī jīva gosvāmī kabe siddhānta-salile
nibāibe tarkānala, citta jāhe jvale*

When will Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, with the waters of conclusive truth, extinguish the fire of false arguments, which are burning my heart?

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura prays to Śrīmatī Yogamāyā-devī in the fifth *kīrtana*, *Āmāra samāna hīna nāhi e samsāre*.

*āmāra samāna hīna nāhi e samsāre
asthira hayechi podī' bhava pārābāre*

The likes of such a lowly, fallen soul as me is not to be found anywhere else in this world. Thus, I have become most agitated due to falling into this vast ocean of material existence.

*kuladevī yogamāyā more kṛpā kori'
āvaraṇa sambaribe kabe viśvodari*

O Goddess Yogamāyā, O the mother of the worlds, when will you be merciful to me and remove this veil of illusions?

Thus, he instructs everyone to pray to Yogamāyā by singing this *kīrtana*.

(2) *Lālasamayī Prārthanā*

In the first *kīrtana* of *Lālasamayī Prārthanā*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructs everyone to take shelter of Vṛndāvana-dhāma by availing themselves of the mercy of Guru-Vaiṣṇavas. By doing so, the *sādhaka* will find himself to be absorbed in the service of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *yugala* at every moment.

In the second *kīrtana*, he states that *rati* (the preliminary stage of *prema*) can be obtained by the mercy of Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas. Such *rati* is not covered by any material designations. He prays to beget such a form of *rati* and a corresponding *siddha-deha* (perfected spiritual form).

*kabe siddha-deha mora haibe prakāśa
sakhī dekhaibe more jugala-vilāsa
dekhite dekhite rūpa haibo bātula
kadamba-kānane jābo tyāji' jāti kula
kabe narottama-saha sāksāt haibe
kabe va prārthanā-rasa citte praveśibe*

When oh when will my perfect spiritual body become manifest, so that a confidential *sakhī* of Śrī Rādhā will show me the conjugal pastimes of the Divine Couple?

In an instant I will take on the form of a mad woman (because of having beheld the forms of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa)

and will rush to the *kadamba* forest, leaving behind my caste and family.

When will I ever be able to come into the very presence of Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and when will the mellow he expressed in his book *Prārthanā* enter into my heart?

In the third *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura prays to be continuously engaged in *kṛṣṇa-sevā* in the association of like-minded devotees (*svajātīyāśaya-snigdha*). To achieve this end, he even expresses his complete neglect for the words and opinion of society.

*śrī-guru-caraṇāmṛta-mādhvika-sevane
matta haye kṛṣṇa-guṇa gabo vṛṇḍāvane
karmī, jñānī, kṛṣṇa-dveśī bahirmukha-jana
ghṛṇa kari' akiñcane karibe varjana
karma-jāḍa-smārta-gaṇa karibe siddhānta
ācāra-rahita ei nitānta aśānta
bātula baliyā more paṇḍitabhimānī
tyajibe āmāra saṅga māyāvādī jñānī
kusaṅga-rahita dekhi' vaisṇava-sujana
kṛpā kari' āmāre dibena āliṅgana*

By drinking the honey-wine ambrosia that has washed the lotus feet of my Divine spiritual master, I will become madly intoxicated and will ecstatically sing about the glorious qualities of Lord Kṛṣṇa in Vṛṇḍāvana.

I will abandon the company of all fruitive actors, speculators, those who are envious of Kṛṣṇa, as well as those

who have turned away from the Lord, considering them to be insignificant.

When will the *karmīs* and *smārtā-paṇḍitas* (who are after dull, materialistic fruitive results) decide that I am very restless and misbehaved?

When will the Māyāvādīs, proud of being great scholars, call me a madman and shun me?

Seeing me thus bereft of all bad association, the most virtuous Vaiṣṇavas will then show their kindness to me by embracing me in great affection.

In the fourth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's pastimes as an unfathomable ocean. Nobody can reach the end of this ocean.

*śāstrera agamya tattva śrī kṛṣṇa āmāra
tāñra līlā-anta bujhe śakati kahāra
tabe murkha jana kena śāstra vicāriyā
gaura-līlā nāhi māne anta nā pāiyā
ananterā anta āche, kon śāstre gāya?
śāstrādhīna kṛṣṇa, ihā śuni' hāsi pāya*

My Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Truth. Even the scriptures cannot approach Him. Who has the power to know the limit of His pastimes?

So then, why are foolish persons discussing and deliberating on the revealed scriptures? They are not reaching the end due to the simple reason that they have not accepted the transcendental pastimes of Lord Gaurāṅga.

Which scripture can find the limit of the limitless? Hearing the words, "Kṛṣṇa is ruled by the scriptures," I smile and laugh.

In the fifth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings the following words while being absorbed in his mood of a *mahā-bhāgavata*:

*kabe mora mūḍha mana chādi anya dhyāna
śrī-kṛṣṇa-carane pābe viśrāmera sthāna*
*kabe āmi jāniba āpane akiñcana
āmāra apekṣā kṣudra nāhi anya jana*
*kabe āmi acāṇḍale karibo pranati
kṛṣṇa-bhakti māgi laba kariyā minati*

When will my foolish mind turn from all other thoughts and take shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa's feet?

When will I understand that I have nothing of value, that no one is insignificant like me?

When will I offer my respectful obeisances unto all the untouchables (*cāṇḍālas*)? Submitting prayers unto them I will humbly beg for a drop of devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

From *kīrtana* 6 to 12, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura prays just like Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī did in his *Vraja-vilāsa-stava*. In these prayers, he expresses his greed to serve the various pastime places of Vraja. In some of these prayers, he prays to have *rati* at the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas, whose character is always supremely immaculate.

*hari hari kabe mora habe hena dīna
bimala vaiṣṇave, rati upājibe, vāsanā haibe kṣīna*

O Śrī Hari! When will I feel affection for the pure Vaiṣṇavas? When will my material desires perish? When will that day be mine?

Elsewhere, he prays to have the qualification to recognize the three classes of Vaiṣṇavas—*uttamā*, *madhyama*, and *kaniṣṭha*:

kaniṣṭha, madhyama, uttamā prabhede, vaiṣṇava trividha gaṇi
kaniṣṭhe ādara, madhyame praṇati, uttame śuśrūṣā śuni

There are three types of Vaiṣṇavas—*kaniṣṭha*, *madhyama*, and *uttama*—and they are distinguished by their characteristics. I have heard [from authorities] that one should give affection to the *kaniṣṭha*-*vaiṣṇava*, offer respectful obeisances to the *madhyama*-*vaiṣṇava*, and fully serve the *uttama*-*vaiṣṇava*.

He further prays, "By the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas, may I always be free from the pride of considering myself to be a Vaiṣṇava. May I always be the Vaiṣṇavas' dog and only maintain my life by honoring their remnants."

'āmi to vaiṣṇava', e buddhi haile, amānī nā habo āmi
pratiṣṭhāśā āsi', hrdaya duṣibe, haibo niraya-gāmī
tomāra kiṇkora, āpane jānibo, 'guru'-abhimāna tyajī'
tomāra ucchiṣṭha, pada-jala-reṇu, sadā niṣkapaṇe bhajī

If I develop the idea that 'I am a Vaiṣṇava,' then I will never become humble. My heart will become contaminated with the desire to receive honor from others and I shall go to hell.

I will know myself to be your servant, having given up the false conception of being *guru*. I shall sincerely honor your remnants, the water that has washed your feet, and the dust of your feet.

He then prays to be freed from any scent of material desire and to attain residence in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, the abode that is non-different from Śrī Vṛndāvana dhāma.

*kabe habe heno daśa mora
tyaji' jaḍa āśā, vividha bandhana, chāḍibo samsāra ghora
vṛndāvanābhede, navadvīpa-dhāme, bāndhibo kuṭīra-khāni
śacira nandana-, caraṇa-āśraya, karibo sambandha mani'*

When will such a condition be mine? Upon renouncing my mundane desires and all varieties of bondage, I shall relinquish this dreadful material existence.

I shall construct a small hut in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, which is non-different from Śrī Vṛndāvana. Recognizing my relationship with Śrī Śacī-nandana, I shall take shelter of His lotus feet.

Next, he states the specialty of Śrī Godrumadvīpa (one of Navadvīpa's nine islands), the abode of *kīrtanākhyā-bhakti*:

*hā hā mora gaurakiśora
kabe doyā kori', śrī godruma-vane, dekhā dibe mana-cora*

O my youthful Gaura! When will You mercifully reveal Yourself to me in the forest of Godruma, O thief of hearts?

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura prays, "By the mercy of Śrī Gaurā-Nityānanda Prabhu, when will I be able to behold the splendor of Vṛndāvana (*vraja-vana*) in Navadvīpa-dhāma (*gaura-vana*)?"

*hā hā kabe gaura-nitāi
e patita-jane, uru kṛpā kari', dekha dibe dutī bhāi*

*duñhu-kṛpā-bale, navadvīpa-dhāme, dekhibo vrajera śobhā
ānanda-sukhada-, kuñja mahohara, heribo nayana-lobha*

Alas, alas! When will the two brothers Gaura-Nitāi bestow Their abundant mercy upon this most fallen person and show Themselves to him?

By the power of Their mercy, I shall see the transcendental splendor of Vraja in Navadvīpa. I shall behold the enchanting Ānanda-sukhada-kuñja, with greedy eyes.

He expresses his longing to do *mādhukarī-bhikṣā* (beg food-stuffs from house to house, like a honey bee (*madhukara*) gathers honey by going from flower to flower) from the homes of all the residents of the *dhāma*.

*kabe āhā gaurāṅga baliyā
bhojana-śayane, dehera jatana, chāḍibo virakta haśā
navadvīpa dhāme, nagare nagare, abhimāna parihari’
dhāma-vāsī-ghare, mādhukarī lobo’, khāibo udara bhari’*

When, as I cry “Gaurāṅga!” will I relinquish eating, sleeping, and other such bodily endeavors, being completely detached from them?

At that time, having abandoned my false ego, I shall wander from town to town in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, performing *mādhukarī* at the homes of the *dhāma-vāsīs*, and thus eat to the full satisfaction of my belly.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructs everyone to spend the entirety of their lives calling out the names of “Gaura-Gadādhara” and “Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava” in a mood of great separation:

*kākuti kariyā, 'gaura-gadādhara', 'śrī rādhā-mādhava' nāma
kāñdiyā kāñdiyā, dākī' uccarave, bhramibo sakala dhāma*

Loudly calling out, "Gaura-Gadādhara!" "Śrī Radhā-Mādhava!"
in entreaty, and bitterly weeping, I shall wander throughout
the entire *dhāma*.

(3) *Vijñapti*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa can be supplicated (*vijñapti*) in three ways:

- (1) *Samprārthanā-mayī*
- (2) *Dainya-bodhikā*
- (3) *Lālasāmayī*

*samprārthanātmikā dainya-bodhikā lālasamayī
ity ādira vividhā dhīraih kṛṣṇe vijñaptirīritā*

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu,
Eastern division 2.152

The wise have describe *Vijñapti*, or submission of prayers, to Śrī Kṛṣṇa of manifold forms, such as *samprārthanātmikā* (prayer with whole-hearted submission of mind, body, and everything to the Lord), *dainyā-bodhikā* (expressing one's insignificance and worthlessness to Lord Kṛṣṇa), or *lālasamayī* (expressing one's yearning for the personal service of the Lord).

In *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru's* *Vijnapti* section, the prayers offered to Gopīnātha are expressed in a mood of *vipralambha-rasa* that is filled with transcendental lament and distress. When the conditioned soul offers such distressful prayers at the lotus feet of Gopīnātha, his heart will become cleared of all the offenses that

he has committed life after life. Thus, his heart, which had become hardened (owing to the tendency to enjoy material sense objects) melts in a divine stupor. By sincerely singing this *Gopinātha! mama nivedana śuno* prayer under the guidance of Śrī Hari, Guru, and Vaiṣṇavas, the conditioned soul can become a *jīvana-mukta*—he becomes liberated even in his conditioned existence.

In his *Vijñapti*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has called out to Gopinātha and addressed Him repeatedly. By doing so, the mood of the ninth *śloka* of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's *Śrī Maṇah-śikṣā* is highlighted, especially the words *mad-īśā-nāthavē vraja-vipina-candram vrama-vane*. *Caitanya-Bhāgavata* also states a similar sentiment.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has said, "Gopinātha is the beloved of my masters (the *gopīs*)."

The servants of *vipralambha-rasa*, which is characterized by such prayers of humility and transcendental grief, have firm faith in the a sentiment of considering Kṛṣṇa to be the beloved of the *gopīs* (who are one's masters). Therefore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has called out to Gopinātha and has offered these heart melting prayers of *Vijñapti* at His lotus feet.

At the conclusion of the *Ucchāvāsa* branch of *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has authored some *kīrtanas* in the *Mukhabandha* section. Firstly, he has written *nāma-kīrtana* (*kīrtana* pertaining to the names of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa), followed by *rūpa-kīrtana* (*kīrtana* pertaining to the form of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa), *guṇa-kīrtana* (*kīrtana* pertaining to the qualities of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa), *līlā-kīrtana* (*kīrtana* pertaining to the pastimes of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa), and *rasa-kīrtana* (*kīrtana* pertaining to the transcendental mellow of Vraja). Those who

do *rūpa-kīrtana* and *līlā-kīrtana* before having acquired the eligibility to perform *nāma-kīrtana* are supporting the views of the *prākṛta-sahajiyās*, whose practices are incompatible with the *rūpānuga* line of thought. Therefore, they don't receive the actual fruit of *kīrtana*.

The *mahājanas* have stated that it is highly beneficial for the *sādhaka* to first perform *gaura-kīrtana* and then *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*. This is the process of performing *nāma-kīrtana*. The first *kīrtana* of *Ucchāvāsa*'s *nāma-sāṅkīrtana* section is:

*kali-kukkura kadana yadi cāo (he)
kali-yuga pāvana, kali-bhaya-nāśana, śrī śacī-nandana gāo (he)*

If you want to be rid of the influence of the dog-like personality of Kali, then just sing the glories of the beautiful Son of Mother Śacī (Śacīnandana). He is the Savior of Kali-yuga (*kali-yuga pāvana*), and He is the destroyer of all fear caused by the age of quarrel (*kali-bhaya-nāśana*).

After singing many of Gaurahari's names, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings the names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in his *Vibhāvarī-śesa kīrtana*, which is the second *kīrtana*. Thus, he exemplifies the mood of manifesting Śrī Kṛṣṇa's names only after manifesting Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's names.

Even in *rūpa-kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura addresses *nāma* as *rūpamaya*—he has sung on the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa only according to His different names. He has also embodied the ideal of singing the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's form along with its accompanying *sambandha-jñāna* (knowledge of one's relationship). These following lines of *rūpa-kīrtana* testify to this quality of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura:

indranīla jīni kṛṣṇa-rūpakhāni
heriyā kadamba-mūle
māna uccāṭana na cale caraṇa
samsāra gelāma bhūle
Janama saphala tā'ra

When I see that form of Kṛṣṇa, whose beauty defeats the dark blue Indranīla jewel (sapphire), standing under a *kadamba* tree, my mind becomes unsteady. My feet cannot move and I forget my material existence.

For those who are qualified, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura states the essence of *sambandha*, *abhideya*, and *prayojana-tattva* in *guṇa-kīrtana*.

He describes the qualities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a heart-touching manner in the following *kīrtana*:

śuno, he rasika jana kṛṣṇa guṇa agaṇana
ananta kahite nāhi pāre
kṛṣṇa jagatera guru kṛṣṇa vāñcā-kalpataru
nāvika se bhāva-pārābāre

hṛdaya pīdita jā'ra kṛṣṇa cikitsaka tā'ra
bhāva roga nāśite catura
kṛṣṇa bahirmukha jane premāmṛta vitarane
krame laya nija antaḥpura

karma-bandha jñāna-bandha, āveṣe mānava andha
tā're kṛṣṇa karuṇā sāgara
pādapadma madhū diyā, andhabhāva ghucāiyā
caraṇe karena anucara

vidhimārga rata jane svādhīnatā ratna dāne
rāgamārge karāna praveśa
rāga-baśavartti ha'ye pārakīya-bhāvāśraye
labhe jīva kṛṣṇa-premāveśa
premāmr̥ta-vāri-dhāra sadā pānarata tān'rā
kṛṣṇa tāhādera bandhū pati
sei saba vraja-jana sukalyāṇa-niketana
dīnahīna vinodera gati

Listen, O those who relish nectarean mellows, the transcendental qualities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are innumerable. Even Lord Ananta [who has millions of hoods and mouths] cannot describe them all. Kṛṣṇa is the spiritual master of the entire universe, He is a wish-fulfilling desire-tree, and He is the navigator, guiding us across the ocean of material existence.

For those whose hearts are ill, Kṛṣṇa is the doctor; He is expert at destroying the disease of material existence. By distributing the nectar of *prema* to all those who are averse to Him, He gradually takes them to His own confidential realm.

Human beings are blinded by their absorption in the bindings of *karma* and *jñāna*, but Kṛṣṇa, who is an ocean of mercy, removes their blindness by granting them the honey of His lotus feet. In this way, He makes them servants of those lotus feet.

By granting the jewel of independence to those following *vidhimārga*, the path of regulative principles, He allows them to enter *rāga-mārga*, the path of spontaneous loving attachment. Being controlled by such attachment and taking shelter of *parakīyabhāva* (paramour love), the *jīva* attains ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa.

Such devotees are always engaged in drinking from the stream of the nectar of *prema*, for Kṛṣṇa is their friend and master. These residents of Vraja, who are abodes of auspiciousness, are the refuge of the poor and fallen Bhaktivinoda.

In *līlā-kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura delineates *kṛṣṇa-tattva*, as well as the *tattva* of *kṛṣṇa-līlā*.

*kṛṣṇa-līlā-samudra apāra
vaikuṇṭha-vihāra samāna ihāra
kabhu nahe jāna sāra
kṛṣṇa narākāra, sarva-rasādhāra
śringārera viśeṣataḥ
vaikuṇṭha-sādhaka, sakhye apāraka,
madhure nā haya rata*

Līlā-kīrtana 1

The pastimes of Kṛṣṇa are like an unfathomable ocean. All of the activities in Vaikuṇṭha can never be compared to the sweet essence of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Goloka Vṛndāvana. Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in the form of a two-armed human being are the reservoir of all transcendental mellites—especially the conjugal mellow. The devotee who is following the rules and regulations of Vaikuṇṭha develops only up to the mellow of fraternity and is in comparison completely unable to taste any such sweetness as is found in the conjugal relationship.

*yamunā-puline, kadamba-kānane
ki herinu sakhi! āja*

śyāma varṣīdhārī, mani-maṇcopari
 kare līlā rasarāja
 kṛṣṇa-keli sudhā-praśravaṇa
 aṣṭa-dalopari, śrī rādhā śrī hari
 aṣṭa-sakhī parijana

O *sakhi!*! What have I seen today? In a *kadamba* grove on the banks of the Yamunā, a beautiful blackish flute-player, seated upon a jeweled platform, is performing His pastimes as the King of all *rasa*. The amorous pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are just like a waterfall of nectar. Situated upon the eight petals [of the jeweled throne] are Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Hari, surrounded by Their attendants, the eight principal *sakhīs*.

In *rasa-kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura shows his absolute (*parama*) and undivided (*svārasikī*) absorption (*āviṣṭatā*) in his own particular object of worship. In such *kīrtanas*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes how Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Their attendants wander on the banks of the Yamunā. He also speaks on how, being impelled by feelings of separation, an *abhisāra* (meeting) is arranged. Thus, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is searched for.

kṛṣṇa varṣī-gītā śuni', dekhi' citra-paṭakhāni
 loka-mukhe guna śravaniyā
 pūrva-rāgākrānta cita, unmāda-lakṣaṇanvita
 sakhi-saṅge calilā dhāiyā
 nikunja-kānane karilo abhisāra
 nā mānilo nivāraṇa, gṛha-kārya agaṇana
 dharmādharma nā karilo vicāra

*yamunā-puline giyā, sakhi-gane sambodhiyā,
 jijñāsilo priyara uddeśa
 chāḍilo prāñera bhaya vanete praveśa haya,
 vamśī-dhvani kariyā nirdeśa
 nadī yathā sindhu-prati, dhāya ati vegavatī,
 sei-rūpa rasavatī satī
 ati vege kuñja-vane, giyā kṛṣṇa-sannidhāne,
 ātma-nivedane kaila mati*

By hearing the song of Kṛṣṇa's flute, seeing His picture, and hearing other persons describe His wonderful qualities, my heart has become attacked and afflicted with remembrance of my previous attachment to Him. Possessed with all the symptoms of madness, I wildly run here and there seeking the company of the *gopīs*.

I have gone to a grove in the forest bowers for the lovers' rendezvous. I have paid no heed to the prohibitions of my family members, I have completely ignored all of my innumerable household duties, and I have not even considered what religious or irreligious activity is for me.

Going to the Yamunā's bank, I ask the *gopīs* for news of my beloved. Following the command spoken by the flute's melody, I spurn all fear for my life and enter the forest.

Just as a river flows into the sea, I irresistibly run like a very swift current, thus proving my chastity. Quickly reaching the forest bowers, I finally come into the presence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in my mood of total self-surrender.

The *sādhaka* only has qualification to listen up to this point. While being situated under the guidance of his *rāgātmika*

Guru-pāda-padma, the *rāgānugā-jīva* can only do *kīrtana* to the listeners until here. After this point, the specialties of such *kīrtanas* (which can only be heard according to one's qualification) can not be told or sung to those who are unqualified and ignorant of *tattva-vicāra* (transcendental realization of the principles and pastimes of the eternal realm). Especially, such *kīrtanas* should not be sung to a general audience. Therefore, at the conclusion of *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru's rasa-kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says:

kena mora durbalā lekhanī nāhi sare?
abhisāra ārambhiyā sakampa antare
milana, sambhoga, vīpralambhadi-varṇana
prakāśa karite nāhi sare mama mana
durbhāgā nā bujhe rāsalilā tattva-sāra
śūkara jemana nāhi cine muktāhāra
adhikāra-hīna-jana-māngala cintiyā
kīrtana karinu šeṣa kāla vicāriyā

Why does my weak pen no longer move? As I begin to describe this meeting, my heart trembles. My mind has no capability to describe the essence of the transcendental Lovers' meeting. Their enjoyment together, Their separation, or any other pastimes. Only the most unfortunate persons cannot understand the essence of the truth of the *rāsa-līlā*, just as a hog cannot recognize what a pearl necklace is. Considering the benefit of persons who are not qualified to hear of these pastimes, and understanding that the time is not right, I end my *kīrtana* here.

GĪTĀVALĪ

Every songbook authored by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has its own specialty and transcendental significance. In his *Śaraṇāgati* prayers, he has given many instructions on *ātma-nivedana*. In *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*, he has given many instructions that lead to the attainment of the topmost form of auspiciousness. He has employed the means of *āmnāya* (direct) and *vyatireka* (indirect) to achieve his transcendental purpose. In the *Gītāmālā*, he has especially spoken on *dāsyā* (devotion in the mood of servitude) and *śānta-bhakti* (devotion in the mood of neutrality). He has also given many invaluable instructions on *rūpānuga-ujjvala-bhakti*. In the *Gitāvalī*, he has especially instructed those *sādhakas* who have an inclination for *arcana* and *bhajana*. He has manifested many instructions that lead to the performance and observance of certain activities by such *sādhakas*.

The *kīrtanas* of *Gitāvalī* have been divided in the following ways:

- (1) *Aruṇodaya-kīrtana*
- (2) *Ārati-kīrtana*
- (3) *Prasāda-sevā-kālīna-kīrtana*
- (4) *Śrī nagara-kīrtana*
- (5) *Śrī nāma-kīrtana*
- (6) *Śreyo-nirṇaya*
- (7) *Śrī Nāmāṣṭaka*
- (8) *Śrī Rādhāṣṭaka*
- (9) *Saṅkīrtana* of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's hundred names
- (10) *Saṅkīrtana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's hundred names
- (11) *Śikṣāṣṭaka-kīrtana*

(1) *Aruṇodaya-kīrtana*

In *Gitāvalī*'s *Aruṇodaya-kīrtana*, the inspiration to spend one's entire life in *hari-kīrtana* and *hari-smarana*, starting from the very beginning of each day, is given. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Aruṇodaya-kīrtana* pours its inherent nectar of instructions in our ears as soon as we awaken from our sleep.

*mukunda mādhava yādava hari
bolo re bolo re vadana bhori'
miche nida-vaše gelo re rāti
divasa śarīra-sāje*

"Mukunda! Mādhava! Yādava! Hari! Everyone, chant! Everyone chant, filling your mouths with the holy names of the Lord! Oh, you pass your nights in vain, captivated by sleep, and your days in decorating your body.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura awakens those conditioned souls who are always controlled by excessive sleep during the night, and who have been sleeping on the lap of *moha* (illusion and bewilderment) birth after birth. He instructs them to chant the names of Mukunda, Mādhava, and Yādava. Indeed, he tells them to engage in *nāma-kīrtana* from the very beginning of their day. He also instructs the conditioned souls to forsake the tenth offense to the holy name, that is, having a conception of "I" and "mine" in regard to the material body. He tells them to not pass their time vainly by always decorating their bodies. He also sings on how a human birth is rarely attained. Therefore, he especially sings on what the ultimate duty is of such a soul—a soul who has attained a human birth.

*emona durlabha mānava-deha
pāiyā ki karo, bhāvanā keha
ebe nā bhajile yaśodā-sūta
carame podibe läje*

Don't any of you think about what you are doing, having achieved this rare human body? If you do not worship the son of Yaśodā now, you will fall into a shameful condition at the time of death.

Being absorbed in pride and illusion, a human being doesn't think about his time of death. Therefore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura (who becomes anguished upon seeing the sorrow of others) instructs everyone to think about their impending death even during the time of dawn.

*udita tapana haile asta
dina gelo boli' haibe vyasta
tabe keno ebe alasa hoi'
nā bhajo hrdaya-rāje
jīvana anitya jānaho sāra
tāhe nānā-vidha vipada bhāra
nāmāśraya kori' jatane tumi
thākaho āpana kāje*

With every rising and setting of the sun, you are busy counting the passing days. Why, then, do you still remain idle and not worship the Lord of the heart? Know this essential fact: material life is temporary and filled with various troubles and burdens. Earnestly take shelter of the holy name and remain engaged in your occupational duties.

The simple instruction of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, an eternal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, is this:

"The topmost duty of the human form of life is that the *jīva* consciously accepts the shelter of Nāma Prabhu and becomes absorbed in *hari-bhajana*. After establishing a relationship with Nāma Prabhu, the *jīva* should practice the different limbs of *bhakti*. The practice of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* while constantly chanting the holy names is the inherent constitutional activity of every *jīva*. This is the only duty of every human being."

In the second *kīrtana* of *Gītāvalī*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sweetly repeats the mood of the following *śruti-mantra*:

*uttīṣṭhata jāgrata
prāpya varān nibodhata
kṣurasya dhārā niśitā duratyayā
durgam̄ pathas tat kavayo vadanti*

Arise! Awake! Approach the self-realized and learn. This material world is like a sharp razor's edge and the path leading out, so the wise say, is hard to tread and difficult to cross.

He speaks on how the conditioned soul has been sleeping in the lap of *māyā* since time immemorial. As a result, the *jīva* has become absorbed in illusion and has forgotten his *svarūpa*. Thus, the *jīva* should revive his conscious self.

*jīva jāgo, jīva jāgo, gorācāda bole
kato nidrā jāo māyā-piśācīra kole*

Wake up, sleeping souls! Wake up, sleeping souls!" calls Śrī Gaura-Candra. "How long will you sleep on the lap of the witch Māyā?"

*bhajibo boliyā ese' samsāra-bhitare
bhuliyā rahile tumi avidyāra bhare*

You came into this material world, saying you will worship the Lord, but having forgotten this, you remain burdened by ignorance.

(2) *Ārati-kīrtana*

In his *Gitāvalī*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura composed the *Gaura-Govinda ārati*:

*bhāle gorā-gadādharerā ārati nehāri
nadīyā-pūrava-bhāve jāu balihārī*

As I behold the wondrous *ārati* of my Lords Gaura and Gadādhara, I enter into the mood of Their existence previous to appearing in Nadīyā (Their *vrindāvana-līlā* as Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa). It is simply indescribable.

He then composed *Śrī Gaura-ārati*:

*jaya jaya gorācāñdera āratika śobhā
jāhnavī-taṭa-vane jaga-mana-lobhā*

All glories, all glories to the beautiful *ārati* ceremony of Śrī Gauracandra, performed in a forest on the banks of the Jāhnavī (Gaṅgā) River. It attracts the minds of everyone in the universe.

He also composed *Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Ārati*:

*jaya jaya rādhā-kṛṣṇa-yugala-milana
ārati karaye lalitādi sakhi-gāna*

All glories, all glories to the meeting of the Divine Couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. The *sakhīs*, led by Lalitā-devī, perform Their *ārati* ceremony.

He further wrote a *Bhoga-ārati*:

*bhajo bhakata-vatsala śrī gaurahari
śrī gaurahari sahi goṣṭha-bihārī,
nanda-yaśomati-citta-hārī*

Just worship Śrī Gaurahari, who is very affectionate to His devotees. He is that very Kṛṣṇa who roams the pasturing grounds of Vṛndāvana with His cows and who steals the hearts of Nanda Mahārāja and Mother Yaśodā.

Ārati is a special limb of *arcana*, which is greatly strengthened if it is accompanied by the performance of *kīrtana*. Thus, many of our previous *ācāryas* and poets have written *ārati-kīrtanas* for this purpose.

However, although many of the *ārati-kīrtanas* that are sung in the *prākṛta-sahajīya-sampradāyas* and in various other temples are said to be *mahājana-pada* (composed by the great preceptors), they are in reality a mixture of speculations that have arisen over the centuries and that are often against the conclusions of *bhakti*. There are many enjoyers who claim to be the servants of the previous *mahājanas*. Their speculations, which are averse to *bhakti* and are a mixture of *rasābhāsa* (overlapping of devotional mélange), have entered into these *kīrtanas*, resulting in overall confusion. People in general are not able to grasp the *kīrtanas* of the *mahājanas*, which are contained in the vast storehouse of transcendental literature that manifested over a period of many years.

Therefore, seeing the unfortunate condition of the Vaiṣṇava society, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura took it upon himself to preserve the purity of *bhajana*. He composed many *kīrtanas*, which are all fully in accordance with the *bhakti-siddhānta* (established principles of devotion) and the moods of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The *ārati-kīrtanas* written by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura are greatly enhanced by the unadulterated line of *bhakti-siddhānta*.

(3) *Prasāda-sevā-kālīna-kīrtana*

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had only one consideration while doing anything: whether or not his act would be favorable for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *sevā*. Indeed, this was the underlying intention of every step that he took. He instructed everyone to only engage in those activities that would be conducive for attaining causeless *kṛṣṇa-sevā*.

While honoring *mahā-prasāda*, a devotee should therefore never have a mood of enjoying the remnants of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, neither should he think that *mahā-prasāda* is meant to serve his taste. Rather, the devotee should consider the remnants of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be non-different from Kṛṣṇa Himself. This mood should be prevalent in the heart. While honoring *mahā-prasāda*, the devotee should think, "I am honoring the remnants of Hari, Guru, and Vaiṣṇavas." By having such a service tendency, we will become completely relieved of *māyā*'s influence and we will only be preoccupied with thoughts of Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-smaraṇa*).

We should never enjoy or renounce any *mahā-prasādam* in an attempt to satisfy our body and senses. We should not think, "*bhāgavata-prasāda* is meant to satisfy my mundane craving." Instead, we should think, "My well-being only lies in that which is held dear to Bhagavān and His *bhaktas*. My love finds its shelter

in theirs." Thus, we should serve *mahā-prasāda* while remembering and contemplating such a mood.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura therefore says that even while honoring *mahā-prasāda*, a devotee should remain engaged in Śrī Hari's service through the medium of His *kīrtana*. '*Prasāda*' means the mercy of Bhagavān and the Vaiṣṇavas. Mercy is not a commodity that is meant to be enjoyed or renounced—mercy is meant to be eternally served. In the following *kīrtanas*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes what is the duty of a devotee before honoring *mahā-prasāda*.

bhāi-re!

*śarīra avidyā-jāla, jadendriya tāhe kāla,
jīve phele viṣaya-sāgare
tā'ra madhye jihvā ati, lobhamaya sudurmati,
tā'ke jetā kāṭhina saṁsāre*

O brothers, the material body is a web of ignorance and its inert senses are the cause of its ruination, for they throw the soul into the ocean of material enjoyment. Among the senses, the tongue is the most greedy and wicked; it is very difficult to conquer in this world.

*krṣṇa bāda dayāmaya, karibāre jihvā jaya,
sva-prasāda-anna dilā bhāi
sei annāmr̥ta pāo, rādhā-krṣṇa-guṇa gāo,
preme dāko caitanya-nitāi*

Kṛṣṇa is so merciful that He has given us His own food remnants to help us conquer the tongue, O brothers. Honor these nectarean foods, sing the glories of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and with *prema* call out, "Caitanya! Nitāi!"

In the second *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says:

bhāi-re!

*eka-dina śāntipure, prabhu advaitera ghare,
dui prabhu bhojane basil
śāka kori' āsvādana, prabhu bole—"bhakta-gaṇa,
ei śāka kṛṣṇa āsvādilo*

O brothers! One day at Śrī Advaita Prabhu's house in Śāntipura, the two Lords (Śrī Caitanya and Śrī Nityānanda) sat for lunch. Upon tasting the *śāk* (leafy green vegetable preparation), Lord Caitanya said, "O devotees, this *śāk* has certainly been enjoyed by Kṛṣṇa!"

*heno śāka-āsvādane, kṛṣṇa-prema āise mane,
sei preme karo āsvādana
jāda-buddhi parihari', prasāda bhojana kori',
'hari hari' bolo sarva-jana"*

"Upon tasting this *śāk*, *kṛṣṇa-prema* arises in one's heart. Relish this *śāk* with love. Forgetting your materialistic conceptions and taking the Lord's remnants, all of you just chant, 'Hari! Hari!'"

In the third *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says:

bhāi-re!

*śacīra aṅgane kabhu, mādhavendra-purī prabhu,
prasādānna karena bhojana
khāite khāite tā'ra, āilo prema sudurbāra,
bole śuno sannyāsīra gaṇa*

Once upon a time, Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī was taking *prasādam* at Mother Śacī's house. As he ate, overwhelming *prema* rose within him, and he exclaimed, "Attention, all renunciants!"

"*mocā-ghaṇṭa phula-baḍi, dāli-dālnā-caccadi,*
śacī-mātā karilo randhana
tā'ra śuddhā bhakti heri', bhojana karilo hari,
sudhā-śama e anna-vyanjanā

"Mother Śacī has cooked various delicacies, such as *mocā-ghaṇṭa* (moist curry made with banana flowers), *phula-baḍi* (edible flowers dipped in batter and fried), *dāli* (*dāl*), *dālnā* (soup made with lentils and vegetables), and *caccadi* (dry curried vegetables). Seeing her pure devotion, Śrī Hari personally ate these [foodstuffs]. These rice and vegetable preparations are like ambrosia.

"*yoge yogī pāya jāhā, bhoge āja ha'be tāhā,*
hari boli' khāo sabe bhāi
kṛṣṇera prasāda-anna, tri-jagata kare dhanya,
tripurāri nāce jāhā pāi"

"Whatever results *yogīs* obtain by their practice of *yoga* will be obtained today by taking these remnants of the Lord. O brothers! Everyone simply chant, "Hari!" and eat. The three worlds are made glorious by the food remnants of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Having obtained these remnants, Śrī Tripurāri (Śiva) dances in ecstasy."

In the fourth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes how Caitanya Mahāprabhu, along with all His associates, honored *mahā-prasāda* in the home of Gauridāsa Paṇḍita:

bhāi-re!

*śrī caitanya-nityānanda, śrīvāsādi bhakta-vṛnda,
gauridāsa paṇḍitera ghare
luci-cini, kṣīra, sāra, miṭhāi, pāyasa āra,
piṭhā-pānā āsvādana kare*

O brothers, once, at the house of Gauridāsa Paṇḍit, Śrī Caitanya, Śrī Nityānanda, and Their devotees headed by Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura, were relishing [various Bengali sweets such as] *luci-cini* (whiteflour *purīs* dusted with sugar), *kṣīra* (sweetened condensed milk), *sāra* (thick cream), *miṭhāi* (sweet meats), *pāyasa* (sweet rice), and *piṭhā-pānā* (coconut cake rolls in sweetened condensed milk).

*mahāprabhu bhakta-gaṇe, parama ānanda-mane,
ājñā dila karite bhojana
krṣnera prasāda-anna, bhojane haiyā dhanya,
krṣṇa boli' dāke sarva-jana*

Mahāprabhu, feeling supreme bliss in His heart, ordered all devotees to eat. Blessed by taking Śrī Kṛṣṇa's remnant grains, everyone chanted the holy names of Kṛṣṇa out loud.

In the fifth *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings the following pastime:

bhāi-re!

*eka-dina nīlācale, prasāda-sevana-kāle,
mahāprabhu śrī-krṣṇa-caitanya*

*bolilena—bhakta-gaṇe, khecarānna śuddha-mane,
sevā kori' hao āja dhanya*

O brothers, one day in Jagannātha Purī, at the time of honoring the Lord's *prasāda*, Mahāprabhu Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya proclaimed, "O devotees, may you become blessed today by honoring the *khichtri* (rice and lentils cooked together) of the Lord in a pure state of mind.

*"khecarānna piṭhā-pānā, apūrva prasāda nānā,
jagannātha dila tomā sabे¹
ākaṇṭha bhojana kori', bolo mukhe hari hari,
avidyā-durita nāhi rabe*

Lord Jagannātha has given you many varieties of extraordinary *prasāda*, such as *khichtri* and *piṭhā-pānā*. Take this *prasāda* until you are filled to the neck, and with your mouth chant, 'Hari! Hari!' Ignorance and sin will not be able to remain.

*"jagannātha-prasādānna, viriñci-śambhura mānya,
khāile prema haibe udaya
emona durlabha dhana, pāiyācho sarva-jana,
jaya jaya jagannātha jaya"*

"The food remnants of Lord Jagannātha are worshipful for Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva. Upon eating these remnants, *prema* will arise in the heart. All of you have obtained such a rare treasure. All glories, all glories to Lord Jagannātha! All glories!"

In the last *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes how Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva Prabhu relish different foodstuffs before going to the forest:

bhāi-re!

*rāma-kṛṣṇa gocāraṇe, jaibena dūra vane,
eta cinti' yaśodā-rohinī
kṣīra, sāra, chānā, nanī, du'jane khāowāno āni',
vātsalye ānanda mane gaṇi'*

O brothers! Knowing that Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa will go to distant forests to tend Their cows, Mother Yaśodā and Mother Rohinī brought *kṣīra* (sweetened condensed milk), *sāra* (thick cream), *chānā* (milk curd), and *nanī* (fresh butter) to feed the two boys. In this way their hearts filled with the ecstasy of motherly affection.

*vayasya rākhāla-gaṇe, khāya rāma-kṛṣṇa sane,
nāce gāya ānanda-antare
kṛṣṇera prasāda khāya, udara bhariyā jāya,
'āra deo' 'āra deo' kare*

All the companion cowherd boys take lunch with Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. They dance and sing, feeling inner bliss. They eat Kṛṣṇa's remnants and their bellies become full, but still they exclaim, "Give us more! Give us more!"

The only underlying intention behind every act should be the gratification of Kṛṣṇa's senses. Such remembrance should always be had. A devotee should consider himself to be an ingredient in the flames of the sacrificial fire that is aimed at the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa's senses. This is the essence of *vaiṣṇava-dharma*. Even while serving *mahā-prasāda*, only the *uddīpana* (stimulus) for the remembrance of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes is favorable for *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*. Therefore, in the *prasāda-sevā* section of his *Gītāvalī*, Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has described Mahāprabhu's pastimes

in Navadvīpa and Jagannātha Puri. He has also described Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *bālyā-līlā* (childhood pastimes). By his *kīrtanas*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has shown everyone how to remember these pastimes while honoring and serving *mahā-prasāda*.

(4) *Śrī Nagara-kīrtana*

There are eight *kīrtanas* in *Gitāvalī's Nagara-kīrtana*. To make the faithful masses inclined towards remembering and serving Śrī Hari, Śrīman Mahāprabhu started *nagara-saṅkīrtana*, a very novel approach towards helping the conditioned souls. Following in Mahāprabhu's footsteps, His devoted followers also wander from town to town and village to village while performing *sāṅkīrtana* with *mṛdaṅgas* and *karatālas*. Thus, by their *sāṅkīrtana*, they awaken many from their material slumber. In his *Gitāvalī*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written eight *kīrtanas* that can be sung by such devotees.

In the first *kīrtana* of *nagara-kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructs the *jīvas* on the chanting of the holy name. The *kīrtana*, *Nadīyā-godrume nityānanda mahājana*, speaks on the marketplace of the holy name.

*kṛṣṇera saṁsāra karo chāḍī' anācāra
jīve dayā, kṛṣṇa-nāma—sarva-dharma-sāra*

"Give up all sinful behavior and live your life with Kṛṣṇa at the center. The essence of all forms of religion is to show compassion upon all living beings and chant the holy names of Kṛṣṇa."

The second *kīrtana* is *Gāya gora madhura svare. Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*. At the end of the *kīrtana*, Śrīla

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gives the following instructions to the *jīvas*:

*māyā-jāle baddha ha'ye, ācho miche kāja la'ye
ekhan cetana pe'ye,
rādhā-mādhava nāma bolo re*

Bound up in the net of *māyā*, you are engaged in useless activities. Now attain full consciousness and chant the names of Rādhā-Mādhava.

*jīvana hailo šeṣa, nā bhajile hrṣikeśa
bhaktivinoda (ei) upadeśa, ek-bāra nāma-rase māto re*

Your life is coming to an end, but you have not worshiped Śrī Hṛṣikeśa. Please heed this advice of Bhaktivinoda and just once relish the nectar of the holy name!

Ekbāra bhāvo mane is the third *kīrtana* of *nāma-kīrtana*. In this *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks on how the conditioned souls are controlled by many material desires, but little do they realize that such desires will never yield any happiness.

In this *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructs the *jīvas* to renounce any desire towards making the body, mind, and senses happy. He also instructs to renounce all false egotism stemming from a conception of "I" and "mine." At the conclusion of the *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura advises the *jīvas* to renounce any mood of victory, defeat, anger, violence, and envy towards other living beings.

He then says, "Just take shelter at the lotus feet of Lord Gaurasundara and sing the names of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and you will become saturated with the mellows of pure spiritual bliss."

In any of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *kīrtanas*, there is no dearth of instructions given on *sambandha-jñāna*—this is the specialty of his *Gītāvalī*.

Rādhā-kṛṣṇa' bol bol bolo re sabāi is the fourth *kīrtana* that is always sung by all the Vaiṣṇavas. Many instructions on *sambandha-jñāna* can be heard from this *kīrtana*:

rādhā-kṛṣṇa bol bol bolo re sabāi
(ei) *śikṣā diyā, sab nadīyā, phirche nece gaura-nitāi*
(miche) *māyāra vaše, jāccho bhese', khāccho hābuḍubu, bhāi*

“Everyone, chant, chant, chant the holy names of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa!” Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu are dancing throughout Navadvīpa, giving this instruction to all. “O brothers, you are caught up in the whirlpool of illusory *māyā* and are desperately struggling to remain afloat.

(jīva) kṛṣṇa-dāsa, e viśvāsa, korle to' āra duḥkha nāi
“If you just develop the faith that the *jīva* is a servant of Kṛṣṇa, you will have no more sorrows.”

In this *nagara-kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura tells all the devotees to beg for a certain desire of theirs to be fulfilled by the general populace:

(rādhā) kṛṣṇa bolo, sarīge calo, ei-mātra bhikṣā cāi
Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “O brothers, simply chant the holy names of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in the association of Vaiṣṇavas. This is all I beg of you.”

The householder devotees reside in towns, cities, and villages. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who is always absorbed in the ser-

vice of Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu, has requested everyone to walk along with him on the path of *rūpānuga-bhakti*.

"While chanting the names of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, you should follow Me—all of you should also become preachers of *hari-kīrtana*," this is a directive issued forth by Mahāprabhu Himself.

In the fifth *kīrtana* of *nagara-kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura recounts how Śrī Goracānda (Mahāprabhu) would loudly sing the *mahā-mantra* for the eternal auspiciousness of all the *jīvas*. Therefore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura also instructs all the *jīvas* to loudly sing the *mahā-mantra*, and to do *kīrtana* of the names "Yaśodā-*jīvana*" and "Gopī-*prāṇadhana*." These are the names of the *viṣaya-vigraha* (the Supreme enjoyers) of *vātsalya-* and *madhura-rasa* respectively). While rendering service to Śrī Vrajendra-nandana, the *anarthas* representing Agha, Baka, and Pūtanā may appear, but there is no need to fear them, as Śrī Kṛṣṇa kills the demons and even bewilders Lord Brahma (*brahmā-vimohana-līlā*), thus assuring the Vrajavāsīs of their well-being. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura proclaims this promise of Kṛṣṇa to everyone by authoring this *kīrtana*.

In the sixth *kīrtana* of *nagara-kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes how Śrī Gaurasundara and His associates would wander in Nadīyā and sing, "*Hari haraye namah kṛṣṇa yādavāya namah, gopāla govinda rāma śrī-madhusūdana*."

In the seventh *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura tells the pastime of how Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu brought the *nāma-cintāmaṇi* of *harināma* from Goloka and distributed this wish-fulfilling name to those who paid the price of their respective faith. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura also speaks on *nāmābhāsa* (the semblance of the holy name) and *śuddha-nāma* (the pure

holy name) in this *kīrtana*. Thus, he has not held himself back in manifesting his unequalled munificence (*mahā-vadanyatā*), and specialty (*vaiśiṣṭa*).

The eight *kīrtana* of *nagara-kīrtana* is sung everywhere:

*hari bole moder gaura elo
elo re gaurāṅga-cānd preme elo-thelo
nitāi-advaita-saṅge godrumē paśilo*

Our Śrī Gaura came chanting, "Hari! Hari!" Śrī Gaurāṅga-cānda came looking greatly disheveled, as if mad, due to *prema*. Along with Nityānanda Prabhu and Advaita Ācārya, He entered the land of Godruma.

(5) *Śrī Nāma-kīrtana*

The first *kīrtana* of *nāma-kīrtana* is *Yasomati-nandana, vrajavara nāgara, gokula rañjana kāna*. The names mentioned in this *kīrtana* were especially dear to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Thus, this *kīrtana* manifests Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's identity of being an eternal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

In his *Nāmaṣṭaka*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has said:

*aghadamana-yaśodā-nandanau nanda-sūno
kamala-nayana-gopī-candra-vṛṇḍāvanendrāḥ
praṇata-karuṇa-kṛṣṇāv ity aneka-svarūpe
tvayi mama ratir uccair vardhatām nāmadheya*

O Holy Name, I pray that my love for You in Your many forms—such as Aghadamana (Killer of Aghasura), Yasodā-nandana (Son of Yaśodā), Nanda-sūnu (Son of Nanda),

Kamala-nayana (Lotus-eyed One), Gopīcandra (Moon of the *gopīs*), Vṛndāvanendra (King of Vṛndāvana), Praṇata-karuṇa (One who is merciful to the surrendered souls), and Kṛṣṇa—may greatly increase.

In this *śloka*, the names 'Yaśodā-nandana' and 'Gopīcandra' highlight the glories of the names 'Yaśodā-nandana' and 'Śyāmasundara' who are the predominating deities of *vātsalya* and *madhura-rasa* respectively. Emphasis is especially given to these names. Following the mood of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has also sung all his *nāma-kīrtanas* according to the answer that Mahāprabhu gave to Śrī Vallabhācārya (as quoted in Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī's *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*):

*prabhu kahe,—"kṛṣṇa-nāmera bahu artha nā māni
Śyāma-sundara' 'yaśodā-nandana,'—ei-mātra jāni
Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya 7.85*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, "I do not accept many different meanings for the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. I know only that Lord Kṛṣṇa is Śyāmasundara and Yaśodānandana. That's all I know.

The Chief Meaning of Kṛṣṇa's name is:

*tamāla-śyāmala-tviṣi śrī-yaśodā-stanandhaye
kṛṣṇa-nāmno rūḍhir iti sarva-śāstra-vinirṇayāḥ
Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya 7.86*

The only purport of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is that He is dark blue like a *tamāla* tree and is the son of mother Yaśodā. This is the conclusion of all the revealed scriptures.

In this *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says *amala-harināma, amiya vilāsa*. He thus says that these pure, holy names of Kṛṣṇa are full of sweet, nectarean pastimes. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's form, qualities, pastimes, and associates are all fully included in His names. After the *amala-harināma* line, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes *kṛṣṇa-lilā* by singing the following names:

*vipina-purandara, navīna nāgara-vara,
vamśī-vadana suvāsā*
*vraja-jana-pālana, asura-kula-nāśana
nanda-godhana-rākhovālā*
*govinda mādhava, navanīta-taskara,
sundara nanda-gopālā*
*yāmuna-tāta-cara, gopī-vasana-hara,
rāsa-rasika, kṛpāmaya*
*śrī-rādhā-vallabha, vṛndāvana-naṭavara,
bhaktivinoda-āśraya*

He is the king of the forests of Vraja and the supreme youthful lover. He holds the flute to His mouth and wears very beautiful garments. He is the maintainer of the residents of Vraja, the killer of many demons, and the protector of Nanda Mahārāja's herd of cows. He is Govinda (the giver of pleasure to the cows, *gopas*, and *gopīs*) and Mādhava (the consort of the topmost Lakṣmī). He is a butter thief and the beautiful cowherd boy of Nanda. He wanders along the banks of the Yamunā River. He is the thief of the young *gopīs'* clothes, and the enjoyer of the *rāsa* of the *rāsa* dance. He is full of mercy, the beloved of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the most expert dancer of Vṛndāvana, and the shelter of Bhaktivinoda.

Doyāla nitāi caitanya' bole' nāc re āmāra mana, the second song of *nāma-kīrtana*, is full of *tattva-siddhānta*. Without the mercy of Śrī Nityānanda and Śrī Caitanya, taste for *kṛṣṇa-nāma* cannot be had. Also, *anarthas*, offenses, and the attachments of this material world will not go away without Their mercy, and Śrī Rādhā-Śyāma's service in Vṛndāvana will not be attained. By this *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura cuts the views of those who are *gauravādīs* (who only believe in Gaura and not in Kṛṣṇa) and *kṛṣṇavādīs* (who only believe in Kṛṣṇa and not in Gaura).

The *gauravādīs* say, "Gaura is Kṛṣṇa; therefore, *gaura-bhajana* is *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*. Why then should we chant *kṛṣṇa-nāma*?" And the *kṛṣṇavādīs* say, "If Kṛṣṇa can be attained by only chanting His name once, then why is it necessary to seek shelter at the lotus feet of Śrī Gaurasundara."

The conceptions of these two so-called lines of thought are influenced by *māyā* and are opposed to the teachings of the *rūpānuga* line. By the mercy of Nitāi-Gaura, taste is had for *kṛṣṇa-nāma*. By the mercy of Gaura, He will Himself be seen as Rādhā-Śyāma in Vṛndāvana.

In each of his *nāma-kīrtanas*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructs everyone to sing *nāma-kīrtana* while being endowed with *sambandha-jñāna* and being devoid of offenses.

hari' bole' deo bhāi āśāra mukhe chāi re

(nirāśa to' sukho re)

bhoga-mokṣa-vāñchā chādi' harināma gāi re

(śuddha-sattva ho'ye re)

Nāma-kīrtana 3

O brothers, chant "Hari!" while looking directly in the face of material desire. (Freedom from mundane hankerings is the platform of actual happiness.) Giving up all desire for mundane enjoyment and liberation, I chant the holy names of the Supreme Lord. (Having become pure and situated in transcendence.)

*asat-saṅga chāḍi', bhāi, bolo hari bolo
vaiṣṇava-caraṇe podi' bolo hari bolo*

Nāma-kīrtana 4

O brothers, give up the association of non-devotees and chant the name of Hari! Falling at the feet of the Vaiṣṇavas, chant the name of Hari!

*rūpānuga vaiṣṇavera piyā pada-jala
rādhā-govinda bolo
dāśa aparādha tyāji' bhukti-mukti-phala
rādhā-govinda bolo*

Nāma-kīrtana 5

Drinking the water that has washed the feet of a Vaiṣṇava who follows in the footsteps of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, chant "Rādhā-Govinda!" Giving up the ten offenses to the holy name, as well as the alluring fruits of material enjoyment and liberation, chant "Rādhā-Govinda!"

(6) *Śreya-nirṇaya*

Every *kīrtana* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is a scripture that is full of *sambandha*, *abhideya*, and *prayojana*. By studying and discussing his *kīrtanas*, the scholarly and the foolish will be able

to equally grasp the purports of the *śāstras*. There will not be any need for them to look for instructions from any other scripture.

In the *Śreya-nirṇaya* section of *Gitāvalī*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gives many instructions on *sambandha-jñāna* that are based on ordinary logic. By contemplating on this skill of his, the readers and listeners will become greatly astonished. All the various philosophies of this world, including the ones that say that all paths lead to God, can offer very little help in achieving real auspiciousness. Rather than offering help, they even become obstacles by presenting themselves as mundane designations. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks of this in great sorrow. In the following *kīrtana*, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has sung the following words:

*jñāna karma kare loka, nāhi jāne bhakti-yoga,
nānā mate haiyā ajñāna
tāra kathā nāhi śuni, paramārtha tattva jāni,
prema-bhakti bhakta-gaṇa-prāṇa*

Most people know only of work and philosophy. They don't know anything about devotional service. Although each of them have different opinions, they are all fools. Don't listen to their talk. Become conversant with knowledge of Paramātmā and learn about devotional service, the life of the devotees.

To the ignorant, it may seem that Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura sung the following lines of this *kīrtana* without considering the support of any logic. Therefore, the *anyābhilāṣī* (as a fruit of his misjudgment) commits a grave offense at the lotus feet of Śrīla

Narottama Ṭhākura by calling him 'goḍā ekadheye.' Desiring the auspiciousness of such offenders, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura took the words of Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura as a foundation and composed many *kīrtanas* that contain the essence of all forms of logic and devotion. Thus, he assured the auspiciousness of those who sincerely search for the Absolute Truth.

In the first song of *Śreya-kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings:

*kṛṣṇa-bhakti vinā kabhu nāhi phalodaya
miche saba dharmādharmā jīvera upādhimaya
yoga-yāga-tapa-dhyāna, sannyāsādi brahma-jñāna,
nānā-kāṇḍa-rūpe jīvera bandhana-kāraṇa haya
vinodera vākyā dharo, nānā kāṇḍa tyāga karo,
nirupādhi kṛṣṇa-preme hṛdaye deho āśraya*

There is no profit in a life devoid of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. Therefore all the so-called religiosity and irreligiosity of a living being who is bewildered by false worldly designations is simply useless. Mysticism, performance of Vedic sacrifices, severe austerities, meditation, renunciation of the world, and cultivating knowledge of the impersonal *brāhmaṇa*—although appearing in the form of various spiritual paths, they are all causes of the soul's further bondage to this world. Therefore, please heed this advice of Bhaktivinoda: Give up all these various paths and just keep pure love of Kṛṣṇa sheltered within your heart, for this alone is transcendental to all mundane designations.

The second *kīrtana* of *Śreya-nirṇaya* is *Āra keno māyā-jāle poditecho, jīva-mīna*. In this *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes the *svarūpa* of Kṛṣṇa, the *jīva*, *māyā*, *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, and *kṛṣṇa-prema* in a very heart-touching manner.

In the third *kīrtana* of *Śreya-nirṇaya*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura likens the devotee's *prema* for *saccidānanda* Śrī Kṛṣṇa to a transcendently beautiful woman. Compassion, religiosity, and divine qualities are the ornaments of her limbs; the divine wisdom of *kṛṣṇa-jñāna* is her silken *sārī*; and *bhakti-yoga* is her fragrance. Being decorated with these ornaments, this mood of love steals Kṛṣṇa's mind.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, "Ornaments have no value if they cannot be used to decorate a form. In the same way, the qualities of compassion and religiosity have no value if they are devoid of *kṛṣṇa-prīti*, for they cannot make Kṛṣṇa happy. Ornaments on a female monkey don't increase its beauty—rather, they only serve to make a caricature of the monkey."

Similarly, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura does not respect the qualities of compassion and religiosity if they are devoid of *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

The fourth *kīrtana* of *Śreya-nirṇaya* has been composed with the intention of subduing the views of the impersonalists.

*'nirākāra nirākāra', kariyā cītkāra
keno sādhakera sānti bhāṅgo, bhāi, bāra bāra*

O brothers, by your screaming out again and again, "The Supreme Lord is formless! The Absolute Truth is a void!" why do you so insist on disturbing the peace of the Vaiṣṇavas?

The fifth *kīrtana* of *Śreya-nirṇaya* is:

*keno āra karo dveṣa, videṣi-jana-bhajane
bhajanera liṅga nānā, nānā deṣe nānā jane*

Why do you continue to hate the way the Lord is worshiped by people of other lands? There exist a number of authentic ways to worship God, according to the customs of various people living in different countries.

By listening to this *kīrtana*, one might think that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has equated the material with the spiritual (*cid-jada-samanya-vāda*). One may also think that he supports the views of those who say that any whimsical path can reach Bhagavān. But such speculation can never be true. This *kīrtana* echoes the following *ślokas* of the *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*:

*ye 'py anya-devatā-bhaktā
yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ
te 'pi mām eva kaunteya
yajanty avidhi-pūrvakam*

Bhagavad-gītā 9.23

Whatever a man may sacrifice to other gods, O son of Kuntī, is really meant for Me alone, but it is offered without true understanding.

*aham hi sarva-yajñānāṁ
bhoktā ca prabhur eva ca
na tu mām abhijānanti
tattvenātaś cyavanti te*

Bhagavad-gītā 9.24

I am the only enjoyer and the only object of sacrifice. Those who do not recognize My true transcendental nature fall down.

Bhaja re bhaja re āmāra māna ati manda is the sixth *kīrtana* of *Śreya-nirṇaya*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura manifests the sublimity of *rūpānuga-bhajana* in this *kīrtana*. At the end of this *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura states that a *sādhaka* can never reside in Vraja if he is not under the guidance of the *rūpānuga-vaiṣṇavas*. In this *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructs the *jīvas* to direct their foolish minds to tread the path of Vraja while always worshiping and remembering Śrī Hari, Guru, and Vaiṣṇavas.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura conveys a similar mood in his seventh *kīrtana*, *Bhāvo nā bhāvo nā, māna, tumi ati duṣṭa*. In this *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructs the *jīvas* to liberate their mind from the poison of sense gratification and from the madness of lust, anger, and the other *anarthas*. Similarly, the desire for material enjoyment, liberation, mundane talks, and the hankering for fame and crooked dealings (which result from hypocrisy) must unequivocally be given up. Having thus given up these obstacles, the *jīvas* should absorb themselves in the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas by being in the association of the *sādhus* while being simple at heart. Without being absorbed or attached to the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas, the wicked mind can never be subdued.

(7) *Śrī Nāmāṣṭaka*

At the start of *Śrī Nāmāṣṭaka*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says:

*śrī-rūpa-vadane śrī-śacī-kumāra
sva-nāma-mahimā karalo pracāra
jo nāma, so hari—kachu nāhi bheda
so nāma satya-miti gāyati veda*

Through the mouth of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Kṛṣṇa, in the form of Lord Caitanya, the son of Mother Śacī, preached the glories of His own holy name. There is no difference between that holy name of Lord Hari and Lord Hari Himself. The Vedic scriptures sing of the true value and glory of the holy name.

In some of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *kīrtanas*, he has used the dialects of Maithili and Vraja-bhāṣā. This is shown in the first *kīrtana* of *Śrī Nāmāṣṭaka*.

The *Nāmāṣṭaka* section of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Gītāvalī* is a translation of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Nāmāṣṭaka*. Although *Nāmāṣṭaka* is a translation, it contains Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's deep insights that he manifested while being an ardent follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's footsteps. Thus, his mood of being a follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī is distinctly seen in every verse of his composition.

In many *kīrtanas* of *Nāmāṣṭaka*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructs everyone on how to pray to Śrī Nāma and to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's lotus feet, to obtain a *sphurti* (divine revelation) of the holy name.

*nāma caraṇe paḍi, bhaktivinoda kahe,
tuyā pade māgahuṇi nilaya*

Namāṣṭaka 1

Falling at the lotus feet of the holy name, Bhaktivinoda says, O Harināma, I pray for residence at Your lotus feet.

*rūpa-svarūpa-pada, jāni' nija sampada,
bhaktivinoda dhari' māge*

Namāṣṭaka 5

Thākura Bhaktivinoda, understanding Your glories, clasps the lotus feet of Rūpa Gosvāmī and Svarupa Dāmodara Gosvāmī.

*bhaktivinoda māge śrī-rūpa-caraṇe
vācaka-svarūpa nāme rati anukṣane*

Namāṣṭaka 6

While falling at the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, this Bhaktivinoda begs for constant attachment and love for the *vācaka*, or divine holy name, of the Supreme Lord.

*bhaktivinoda rūpa-gosvāmī-caraṇe
māgaye sarvadā nāma-sphūrti sarva-kṣane*

Namāṣṭaka 7

While falling at the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, Thākura Bhaktivinoda constantly begs that at every moment there be the transcendental vibration of the holy name.

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāma, rasane sphuri', pūrā'lo āmāra āśa
śrī-rūpa-pade, yācaye ihā, bhaktivinoda-dāsa*

Namāṣṭaka 8

This servant, Bhaktivinoda, prays at the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, "May the holy names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa fulfill all my desires by manifesting upon my tongue."

Yaśodā-nandana Śyāmasundara, who is the *viṣaya-vigraha* (object of devotion) of *vātsalya-* and *madhura-rasa* (the mellow of parenthood and conjugal love) is the worshipable deity of the Rūpānugas. In Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, the names Nandatanuja, Govinda, and Lampāta, indicate Gopī-candra, who is Yaśodā's son and bears the hue of a *tamāla* tree. This is also seen in Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Nāmāṣṭaka*, which contains the names, Yaśodā-nandana, Kamala-nayana, Gopī-candra, Vṛṇdāvanendra, and so on.

According to the mood of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (who established the innermost heart's desire of Śrīman Mahāprabhu), Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura also stated the glories of names like, Rādhikā-rañjana, Gopī-vimohana, and Yaśodā-nandana. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself destroys those moods that are against Vraja's *madhura-* and *vātsalya-rati*. Therefore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura states the names Pūtanā-ghātana, Agha-baka-mardana, and Kāliya-śātana in his *Nāmāṣṭaka*. In the name Pranata-karuṇā, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has manifested the glories of Śrī Gaurasundara, who is the deity of munificence (*audārya-vigraha*).

(8) *Śrī Rādhāṣṭaka*

The eight *kīrtanas* of *Śrī Rādhāṣṭaka* that belong to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Gitāvalī* are the life-giving medicine for even the eternally liberated Rūpānugas (*rūpānuga-muktakula*). In every *kīrtana* of *Rādhāṣṭaka*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings

of *kṛṣṇa-sambandha-jñāna*. He also cuts asunder the views of those who despite being rooted in the bodily conception of life, engage themselves in so-called *rasa-vilāsa*, which is a perverse form of its pristine counterpart. At the end of the first *astaka* of *Śrī Rādhāṣṭaka*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings the following words:

*chodata dhana-jana, kalatra-sūta-mita,
chodata karama geyāna
rādhā-pada-parikaja, madhurata sevana,
bhaktivinoda paramān*

Relinquishing wealth, followers, wife, sons, and friends, and giving up materialistic activities and speculative knowledge, one should become absorbed in the sweetness of *sevā* to Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet. This is Bhaktivinoda's conviction.

When the rarely obtained super-excellent fortune of being Śrīmatī Rādhārānī's maidservant dawns in one's heart, the devotee should relinquish the afore-mentioned relatives and become one-pointedly engaged in the service of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī's lotus feet. Just as pure *bhakti* cannot be attained while a person is bound by *karma* and *jñāna*, similarly, the service of Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī Śrīmatī Rādhārānī cannot be achieved as long as one is attached to one's wealth, followers, wife, and children.

The *grhastha-līlā* (householder pastimes) of the *mahā-bhāgavatas* is not like the family life of conditioned souls who are stricken by *anarthas*. In their *bhajanamaya* homes, they behold the realm of Goloka. But from the external perspective, it

is seen that even *mahā-bhāgavatas* do not wish to continue their *grhastha-līlā*. Although they consider their household life to be Kṛṣṇa's *samsāra*, and although their household life is entirely devoid of even a drop of material enjoyment, they only desire to be under the guidance of the maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Thus, they wish to be engaged in the service of Śrī Rādhā-Govinda.

According to Mahāprabhu's desire, Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda Prabhu renounced his family and started manifesting the service of augmenting Mahāprabhu's moods in the *gambhīrā*. In the association of Mahāprabhu, he was absorbed in relishing the *rasa* of *kṛṣṇa-kathā* at every moment. Similarly, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has also spoken such *kathā* of the maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. By imitating the *prākṛta-sahajiyās* who are attached to home, body, *karma*, *jñāna*, enjoyment, and artificial renunciation, a person will not become a recipient of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's mercy, even if he chants "Rādhe Rādhe."

While describing the confidential means of attaining the service of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings the following words in the first *kīrtana* of *Śrī Rādhāṣṭaka*:

*rādhā-pada vinā kabhu kṛṣṇa nāhi mile
rādhāra dāsīra kṛṣṇa, sarva-vede bole*

Without the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā, one can never attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa. All the Vedic scriptures declare that Kṛṣṇa belongs to the maidservants of Rādhā.

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī conveyed the same sentiment in his *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*:

*pādābjayos tava vinā vara dāsyam eva
nānyat kadāpi samaye kila devī yāce
sākhyāya te mama namo 'stu namo 'stu nityam
dāsyāya te mama raso 'stu raso 'stu satyam*

O Devī! I am not praying for anything except that most exalted direct service to Your lotus feet. Time and again, I offer *praṇāma* to Your *sakhītvā*, a position as Your *sakhī*, but I swear that my unwavering devotion will always be only for Your *dāsītvā*, a position as Your servant.

A *sādhaka* can only relish the *rasa* of *kṛṣṇa-bhajana* by being under the guidance of the followers of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī. Such immaculate *rasa* is the fruit of their association. It is impossible to relish this *rasa* by any other means. Without the mercy of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha, it is not possible to attain the mercy, and service of Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, because Rūpa and Raghunātha are the eternal associates of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī. Therefore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructs everyone to pray to Rūpa-Raghunātha by the medium of his *Rādhāṣṭaka* prayers:

*bhakativinoda, rūpa-raghunāthe,
kahaye caraṇa dhori'
heno rādhā-dāsy, sudhīra-sampada,
kabe dibe kṛpā kari'*

Rādhāṣṭaka 4

Clasping the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Raghunātha, Bhaktivinoda says, "When will you bestow your mercy upon me and give me eternal service to that Rādhā, for Her service is the wealth of those who are truly wise.

*e heno rādhikā-pada, tomādera su-sampada,
dante tṛṇa yāce tava pāya
e bhaktivinoda hina, rādhā-dāsyāṁṛta-kana,
rūpa raghunātha! deho tāya*

Rādhāṣṭaka 5

O Rūpa and Raghunātha! Your great treasure is the lotus feet of such a Rādhikā. This Bhaktivinoda, who is very fallen and lowly, prays at your lotus feet with a straw between his teeth. Please bestow upon me a nectarean particle of eternal service to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī!

*e heno rādhikā-caraṇa-tale
bhaktivinoda kāṇḍiyā bole
'tuyā gaṇa-mājhe āmāre gaṇi'
kiṇkorī kariyā rakho apani'*

Rādhāṣṭaka 7

Weeping at the lotus feet of this Rādhikā, Bhaktivinoda says, "Count me among Your personal associates and keep me as Your maidservant."

*heno rādhā-paricaryā jākara dhana
bhaktivinoda tā'ra māgaye caraṇa*

Rādhāṣṭaka 8

Bhaktivinoda begs at the lotus feet of those whose wealth is the service of Śrī Rādhā.

In the final section (*pariśiṣṭa*) of the *Rādhāṣṭaka* prayers, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has said that it is the inherent nature (*svabhāva*) of the followers of *rāgātmika* Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha

to always sing of the names and qualities of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura compares such glorification of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī to sweet scented butter-cream.

*nava-sundara pīyūṣa rādhikā-nāma
ati-miṣṭa manohara tarpana-dhāma
krṣṇa-nāma madhurādbhuta gāḍha dugdhe
atīva jatane karo miśrita lubdhe
surabhi rāga hima ramya taṇhi āni'
aharaha pāna karoha sukha jāni'
nāhi rabe rasane prākṛta pipāsā
adbhuta-rasa tuyā pūrāobo āśā*

Rādhāṣṭaka Parīṣṭa

The name of Rādhikā is ever-fresh and lovely, and it is pure ambrosia. It is very sweet, utterly enchanting and the abode of complete satisfaction. With great care, you should eagerly blend this ambrosial name of Rādhikā with the wonderful sweet condensed milk of the name of Kṛṣṇa.

Now add into that mixture the sweet fragrance of loving affection, which is both cool and delightful. Drink this nectar day and night, and you will know what true happiness is. No longer will there remain on the tongue a thirst for mundane tastes, for these wonderful transcendental mellow will fulfill all your desires.

By continuously relishing the *nāma-kīrtana* of Śrī Rādhā on the service-inclined tongue, a thirst for material enjoyment will no longer remain, and the devotee will become fully satisfied by the mellow of *unnata-ujjvala-rasa*. At the end of the *parīṣṭa* section,

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that it is only possible to render service to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's names by being under the guidance of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's eternal associate, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

*dāsa-raghunātha-pade bhaktivinoda
jāco-i rādhā-kṛṣṇa-nāma pramoda*

Having fallen at the lotus feet of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Bhaktivinoda begs for ecstatic rapture in hearing and chanting the divine names of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

(9) *Śrīman Mahāprabhura Śata Nāma -
One hundred names of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu*

Gaura-līlā has been described in a concise form in *Gitāvalī's Śrīman Mahāprabhura Śata Nāma*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has also described *gaura-līlā* in *Śrī Gaurāṅga-smaraṇa-maṅgala-stotra*. Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has written the following words in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

*ei grantha lekhāya more 'madana-mohana'
āmāra likhana yena śukera paṭhana
Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi 8.78*

Actually *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* is not my writing but the dictation of Śrī Madana-Mohana. My writing is like the repetition of a parrot.

*sei likhi, madana-gopāla ye likhāya
kāṣṭhera puttalī yena kuhake nācāya
Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi 8.79*

As a wooden doll is made to dance by a magician, I write as Madana-gopāla orders me to do so.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura highlighted the same mood by writing the following words at the start of *Mahāprabhura Śata Nāma*:

*nadīyā-nagare nitāi nece' nece' gāya re
bhaktivinoda tā'r pode rāṅga-pāya re*

Oh! In the towns and villages of Nadīyā, Lord Nityānanda dances ecstatically while singing these divine names. And Oh! Bhaktivinoda falls down at His reddish lotus feet.

The names that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura manifested in *Mahāprabhura Śata Nāma* indicate his uniqueness and ingenuity. Some of these names are Markaṭa-vairāgī-danḍī, Āryadharma-pāla, Madhvācārya-sampradāya-patha, Antardvīpa-śāśadhara, Sīmantavijaya, Godruma-vihārī, Madhyadvīpa-lilāśraya, Koladvīpa-pati, Ṛtudvīpa-maheśvara, Jahnu-modruma-rudradvīpeśvara, Śrīnivāsa-ghra-dhana, Navakhanda-raṅganātha, Jāhnava-jīvana, Nagarakīrtana-simha, Bhaktadoṣa-hanta, Bhāratī-tārana, Kṛṣṇa-tattva-adhyāpaka, Nirdaṇḍi-sannyāsī, and Svānanda-āsvādanānandī.

**(10) Śrī Kṛṣṇera Viṁśottara Śata Nāma -
One Hundred and Twenty Names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa**

In his *Gītāvalī*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has composed eight prayers of *Śrī Kṛṣṇera Viṁśottara Śata Nāma* to correspond to the *aṣṭa-prahara nāma-kīrtana* (*kīrtana* sung during the eight segments of the day) sung by the general masses. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote *Mahāprabhura Śata Nāma* after he had heard these names of Mahāprabhu being sung by Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu. Similarly, he wrote *Kṛṣṇera Śata Nāma* after he had heard them

being sung by Mahāprabhu (who has accepted the mood of a devotee). Therefore, he has written the following words at the start of the glorification:

nagare nagare gorā gāya

Lord Gaura sings these names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa while going from one village to another.

In *Śrī Kṛṣṇera Viṁśottara Nāma*, the listeners will be able to identify some of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's dear names and *śrī vigras* (forms) of his worshipable Lord. Some of his *priya-vigras* are Svānanda-sukhada-kuñjabihārī, Rādhā-Mādhava, Rādhā-vallabha, Rādhā-ramaṇa, Rādhā-vinoda, Rādhākānta, Rādhā-rasika, Rādhā-pramoda, Rādhānātha, Rādhā-caraṇāmoda, Rādhā-milana-modha, Giridhārī, Yaśodā-nandana, Yamunātīra-vanacārī, Vrajajana-rañjana, Rāsa-rasānanda, and Gopījanānanda.

GĪTĀMĀLĀ

The first 27 *kīrtanas* of *Gītāmālā* are known as *Yāmuna-bhāvāvalī*. These *kīrtanas* depict the longing of those who are in *sānta-* and *dāsy-a-rasa*. The *kīrtanas* of *Yāmuna-bhāvāvalī* have been composed according to *stotra-ratna*, the prayers offered by the Śrī Vaiṣṇava Ācārya, Śrī Yamunācārya, which also reflect the mood of *sānta-* and *dāsy-a-rasa*. *Sānta-* and *dāsy-a-rasa* do not necessarily represent *mādhurya-rasa*.

Another name of Yamunācārya is “Ālavandāru Ṛṣi.” Many compositions of his *Stotra-ratna* have been quoted in the writings of our *gauḍiya-ācāryas* like Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Jīva Gosvāmī, and Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī. Similarly,

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the best of the Rūpānugas, assimilated the moods of these *stotras* and manifested his *Gītāmālā*'s *Yāmuna-bhāvāvalī* to the residents of this world.

Being under the guidance of the devotees, a *sādhaka* should sincerely serve the lotus feet of lotus eyed (Kamala-locana) Bhagavān (who bestows the topmost form of bliss), solely for His happiness.

Śrī Vyāsa, and the other sāṅkīrtans repeatedly perused the scriptures and composed many *śāstras* that are in the line of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In these *śāstras*, they manifested the name, form, qualities, and pastimes of Śrī Bhagavān.

*suddha-sattva-mayi līlā, mukhya-śāstre prakāśila,
jīvera kuśala suvidhane
rajas-tamo-guṇa-andha, asura-prakṛti manda-
jane tāhā bujhite nā jāne*

Kīrtana 3

Your eternal pastimes of pure transcendental goodness are described in these principal scriptures for the welfare of all souls. However, those unfortunate ones who are blinded by the material modes of passion and ignorance, who harbor the nature of demons, and who are foolish and dull-minded cannot understand Your divine form or pastimes which are depicted in all these scriptures.

*nāhi māne nitya-rūpa, bhajīyā manduka-kūpa,
rahe tāhe udāsīna praya
e bhaktivinoda gāya, ki durdaiva hāya hāya,
hari-dāsa hari nāhi pāya*

Those who live in this universe but are not interested in Your eternal form remain completely oblivious, just like ignorant frogs who live in a small, shallow well. Now Bhaktivinoda sings, "Alas! What an unfortunate situation has arisen here! The eternal servants of Hari are not serving their eternal Lord Hari!"

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura then instructs everyone to spend the rest of their lives in the association of the devotees, where the nectarean pastimes of Śrī Bhagavān are always relished.

*stanya-pāyī śiśu-jane, mātā chāde krodha-mane,
śiśu tabu nāhi chāde māya
je hetu tāhāra āra, e jīvana dharivāra,
mātā vinā nāhika upāya*

A mother may sometimes neglect her breast-suckling children out of anger, but still the children could never give up their mother. This is because such small helpless children are not able to maintain their lives at all without their mother, being totally dependent on her.

*e bhaktivinoda kaya, tumi chāda dayāmaya,
dekhiyā āmāra doṣa-gana
āmi ta' chādite nāri, tomā vinā nāhi pāri,
kakhana dharite e jīvana*

Similarly, Bhaktivinoda says to You, "Oh Lord Who is overflowing with compassion, You may reject me if You like, seeing all of my offenses. But still, I will never be able to abandon You, for I cannot maintain my life under any circumstances without You."

Upon receiving the incomparable shelter of the devotees' mercy, and the strength of *bhakti*, a devotee becomes situated at the lotus feet of the Lord.

While wandering in the fearsome forest of *samsara*, if a conditioned soul (due to his inconceivably good fortune) folds his hands and offers *pranama* (obeisance) to the lotus feet of Bhagavān, then all his inauspiciousness will go far away at that very moment. Thus, he achieves the topmost position when his eternal auspiciousness manifests. Conversely, only the most unfortunate person will not offer *pranama* unto the lotus feet of the Supremely compassionate Śrī Bhagavān.

A person will have the *darśana* of the *sādhus* when he becomes a recipient of Bhagavān's mercy.

*se-vibhāva-bahirabhuta, haite haile he acyuta,
kṣana-mātrā sahite na pāri
deha, prāṇa, sukha, āśā, ātma-prati bhalavāsā,
sarva-tyāga kārite vicārī*

Oh Acyuta, most infallible Lord! I am not able to tolerate even a split second of life outside this divine wealth of Your eternal service. Therefore I have now decided to renounce everything that is near and dear to the illusioned soul, such as the body, the life, material pleasures, as well as all hopes for future sense gratification.

*e saba jāuka nāśa, śata-bāra śrīnivāsa,
tabu thāku dāsatva tomāra
e bhaktivinoda kaya, krṣṇa-dāsa jīva haya,
dāsyā vinā kivā āche āra*

Oh Residence of the Goddess of Fortune! Let all these things be neglected by me and fall into abject ruination hundreds of times; I don't mind, for I will still remain fixed in Your eternal service. Bhaktivinoda says that the soul is naturally the servant of Kṛṣṇa, and except for eternal service there is no other reality.

In his *Gitāmālā*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura follows the moods of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Kārpaṇya-pañjikā*. He also named this section 'Kārpaṇya-pañjikā', or 'Vijñapti-nivedana'.

In Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Kārpaṇya-pañjikā*, his one-pointed adherence to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī is shown. The word *kārpaṇya* implies humility, and *pañjikā* implies a supplication.

While residing in a *kuṇja* (grove) in Vraja, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has prayed to Nijeśvarī Śrī Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī, and Īśanātha Śrī Kṛṣṇa with grief-stricken words. In the prayers of *Kārpaṇya-pañjikā*, the name, form, qualities, associates, and the specialty of the pastimes of Īśa and Īśanātha have been sung. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks of his disqualification in the following way to Śrī Rādhā-Govinda:

tomadera kṛpā pāi, e-rūpa yogyatā nāi,
yadio āmāra vraja-vane
duṇhe mahā-kṛpā-maya, jāni' kainu padāśraya,
kṛpā karo, e adhama jane

I am certainly not at all fit to receive the mercy of You both in Vṛndāvana. However, I have still taken refuge at Your lotus feet, for I know that You both are the topmost merciful personalities. Please be kind to this most fallen soul.

kevala ayogya nahi, aparādhī āmi hoi,
tathāpi karaha kṛpā dāna
loke kṛpādrṣṭi jana, kṣame aparādha-gaṇa,
tumi duṛhe mahā-kṛpavān

Not only am I undeserving, I am actually an offender to Your lotus feet. Nevertheless, I still beg You both now to bestow Your kind favor. Just as a great soul is very tolerant of the ignorant public, compassionately forgiving their offenses, similarly You both are certainly the most supremely sympathetic personalities.

kṛpā-hetu bhakti-sāra, leśābhāsa nāhi tāra,
kṛpā-adhikārī nāhi āmi
duṛhe mahā-līlēśvara, haiyā sei līlāpara,
kṛpā kara vraja-jana-svāmi

The most essential effect of Your mercy is to finally get devotional service. However, I do not possess even a fraction of a drop of devotion, and therefore I have no right to receive Your mercy. In this world, You are the Supreme Master of the most magnificent pastime of all—the *rasa* dance. So I ask You now to please be merciful to me as You are performing this great pastime, Oh Lord of the Vrajavāsīs!

In *Kārpaṇya-paṇjikā*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes the *svabhāva* (nature) of us conditioned souls in a very heart-touching manner. He thus instructs us how to sincerely admit our shortcomings and deficiencies at the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā-vinoda. The transcendental names of Śrī Rādhā-Govinda will not

manifest on our tongue as long as such unpretentious humility has not arisen in our heart. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings:

*adhame uttamā māni, mūḍha, vijna, abhimānī,
duṣṭa haiyā śiṣṭa-abhimāna
ei doṣe doṣī haiyā, gela ciradina baiya,
nā karinu bhajana-vidhāna*

Some of my offenses are as follows: I have regarded my most degraded self as the best man of all. Even though foolish like an ass, I consider myself to be very wise due to my false sentimentality. Thus I have actually become most polluted and mischievous underneath my false conception of being gentle and good-natured. Being guilty of these offenses, I have spent many days without ever worshiping You.

Even if endowed with only a little faith and service tendency, when a person listens to all the *kīrtanas* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Kārpaṇya-paṇjikā*, which he has sung with great longing and grief, then his thunderbolt-like heart will surely melt.

Śrīmatī Rādhikā felt intense pangs of separation when Śrī Kṛṣṇa left to Mathurā. *Bhajana* done under the guidance of such moods of separation, longing, and *mahā-prema*, is the topmost form of *bhajana*. The devotees of this *rasa* consider themselves to be extremely insignificant and address Dina-dayardranatha Śrī Kṛṣṇa in this mood. It is natural for the *jīvas* to do *bhajana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a mood of separation.

This mood of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has fully manifested in his *Kārpaṇya-paṇjikā*.

Śoka-śātana

Even if there is a cause for the *grha**stha*-*vaiṣṇavas* to lament, they do not do so. Rather, they remain undisturbed and continue fulfilling the *mano'bhiṣṭa* of Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga. Their service to Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtana-rāsa* continues unhindered. This ideal of the householder Vaiṣṇavas is wonderfully seen in *Gitāmālā*'s *Śoka-śātana*.

The *kīrtanas* of *Śoka-śātana* make the consciousness of the householder Vaiṣṇavas fixed at the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus, these heart-touching *kīrtanas* embody many instructions of *sambandha-jñāna*. Upon the awakening of *sambandha-jñāna*, lamentation, fear, and all other unwanted elements are immediately dispelled.

The *grha**stha* Vaiṣṇavas engage in *kṛṣṇa-saṁsāra*; they don't do *māyā-saṁsāra*. *Kṛṣṇa-saṁsāra* means *nāma-saṅkīrtana-saṁsāra*. Śrī *kṛṣṇa-nāma* is the Prabhu (master) of this *saṁsāra*. A *śuddha-vaiṣṇava* never considers himself to be the Prabhu. By accepting Śrī *kṛṣṇa-nāma* as the Prabhu of one's *saṁsāra*, lamentation, and illusion will never be able to attack one. And then, everything will be seen as being favorable for Kṛṣṇa's service.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has based his *Śoka-śātana* on the 25th chapter of Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavata's *Madhya-līlā*. This chapter contains the pastime of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's son departing to the eternal abode. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has combined this chapter with his instructions on how to achieve eternal auspiciousness for one's soul. Therefore, the *Śoka-śātana* is a compilation of his prayers that are based on this pastime.

Śātana means to destroy. The *kīrtanas* of *Śoka-śātana* are very grave and composed of a mood of *karuṇā* (pathos). They

are also simultaneously full of *bhakti-siddhānta*. Therefore, these *kīrtanas* are called *palagana*. In these songs of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the prayers of Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura and his four brothers have been shown. These prayers are fully saturated with moods of surrender, and these moods of surrender are embodied in the lives of the ideal *grhastha* Vaiṣṇavas.

*ohe prāneśvara, e hena vipada,
prati-dina jena haya
jāhāte tomāra, caraṇa-yugale,
āsakti bādite raya*

The family members of Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura said, "O Lord of our lives! If calamities like this would happen every day, then that would only increase our deep loving attachment to Your lotus feet!"

*vipada-sampade, sei dina bhala,
je dina tomāre smari
tomāra-smarana-rohita je dina,
se dina vipada, hari*

"This calamity of losing our brother today is actually our great fortune, for on this day we are remembering Your Lordship. If, on some other day, we are bereft of Your remembrance, then that day is actually the real calamity for us, Oh Lord."

A person who misuses the blessings of the Guru-varga—that is, he who, instead of making the moods of non-duplicitous humility, distress, and separation appear in his heart, thinks, "I am a great Vaiṣṇava"—is very unfortunate. Such a person

consequently becomes proud and will have a constant craving for name and fame. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura disapproves of such vanity in the following way while also describing how one can be free of this crippling mental disposition:

*śrī-guru-vaiṣṇava more dilena upādhi
bhakti-hine upādhi ebe haila vyādhi*

All the assembled Vaiṣṇavas, whom I consider to be my spiritual masters, have given me this title of Bhaktivinoda, but because I am totally devoid of any trace of devotion, this title has simply become like a painful ailment for me.

*yatana kariyā sei vyādhi nivāraṇe
śarana lainu āmi vaiṣṇava carane*

Taking great care to check the spreading of this disease, I have sought refuge at the lotus feet of all the Vaiṣṇavas.

*vaiṣṇavera pada-raja mastake dhariyā
e śoka-śātana gāya bhaktivinodiyā*

Accepting the dust of the Vaiṣṇavas' lotus feet upon my head, the lowly Bhaktivinoda sings this story called *Śoka-śātana* (The Dispelling of Grief).

Śrī Śrī Rūpānuga Bhajana-Darpaṇa

In the *kīrtanas* of *Śrī Rūpānuga-bhajana-darpaṇa*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes the *rasa-vicāra* of *Bhakti-rasāmrta-sindhu* and *Ujjvala-nīlāmani* to the qualified *sādhakas*. Such transcendental moods, and contemplations on the different features of *rasa* in the form of *kīrtanas* are rarely heard of in this world.

At the start of *Bhajana-darpaṇa*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura shows the ideal of following in the footsteps of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, the best of the *rūpānugas*. In this *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura offers his prayers to Śrī Guru, Śrī Gauracandra, the Divine Couple of Vṛndāvana, and to the lotus feet of the Vrajavāsīs. He also prays to always be under the guidance of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and then performs a greed-filled *ārati* to attain the service of the Vrajavāsis.

By the influence of extremely good fortune accrued for many, many births, the desire awakens within the heart of a fortunate soul to taste the sweetness of eternal transcendental mellows (*rasa*). Then, the greed for attaining this desire attracts the soul to Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma, where one becomes madly absorbed in worshiping Lord Kṛṣṇa, following the process outlined by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

*bhajana-prakāra jata, sakalera sāra mata,
śikhāila śrī-rūpa gosāñi
se bhajana nā jāniyā, kṛṣṇa bhajīvare giyā,
tuccha kāje jīvana kātāi*

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has so kindly given us his valuable teachings on the essential techniques for properly worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Whoever tries to worship Kṛṣṇa without being aware of these methods will simply waste his entire life in useless labor.

When the desire to engage in *rūpānuga-bhajana* manifests in a *sādhaka*, he should strive to renounce any separate desire, like endeavoring for *karma*, *jñāna*, and *yoga*. It is of the utmost necessity to renounce all forms of extraneous desires.

By being in *sādhu-saṅga*, firm faith arises in *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. This faith is called 'śraddhā' and it is the seed of the creeper of devotional service (*bhakti-latā-bīja*).

Only one who has a natural taste to be situated on the path of *rāgānuga-bhakti* can become a *rūpānuga*, and for the *sādhaka* who has such a desire (to become a *rūpānuga*), it is necessary to have knowledge of *prākṛta-* and *aprākṛta-rasa-tattva* (mundane and transcendental mellites). A person who exhibits laziness while trying to cultivate *bhakti-siddhānta* and *rasa-tattva* can never become a *rūpānuga*.

*rūpānuga tattva-sāra, bujhite ākāṅkṣā jāñra,
rasa-jñāna tāñra prayojana
cinmaya ānanda-rasa, sarva-tattva jāñra vaśa,
akhaṇḍa parama-tattva-dhana*

For those who long to understand the essential truth of *rūpānuga*, it is necessary to have some basic knowledge of *rasa* (transcendental mellites). Such spiritually blissful conscious mellites influence and control all other subordinate truths, for they are the hidden treasure of the supreme, absolutely indivisible Truth of all truths.

*je rasa prapañca-gata, jada-kavye prakāśita,
parama rasera asanmūrti
asanmūrti nitya naya, ādarṣera chāyā haya,
jena marīcikā jala-sphūrti*

When this *rasa* finds expression in the material realm, it is praised in the mundane poetic literatures of this world, but that is only a distorted reflection of the original supreme mellow. It is not eternal. It is an imitation or shadow of the real mood, like a mirage of water in a desert. Indeed, it is like the demon Marīci, who falsely appeared as a deer.

In his *Śrī Rūpānuga Bhajana-darpaṇa*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura manifests Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* in very simple language. He presents the ocean of *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*'s devotional truths in concise *kīrtana* form.

*nitya līlā dviprakāra, sāntara o nirantara,
jāhe maje rasikera māna
janma-vṛddhi daitya-nāśa, mathurā-dvārakā-vāsa,
nitya-līlā sāntare gaṇana*

Kṛṣṇa's eternal pastimes, which are always meditated upon by those who are *rasika* (skilled in relishing transcendental mellites), are of two types: (1) *santara*—pastimes performed in the material world at intervals, with a beginning and an end, but which repeat eternally; and (2) *nirantara*—pastimes performed in the spiritual world as perpetual *aṣṭa-kālīya*, or eight-fold daily sports. *Santara-nitya-līlā* includes Kṛṣṇa's birth, His growth through childhood and youth, the killing of many different kinds of demons, and His journey to and residence at Mathurā and Dvārakā.

*divā-rātra aṣṭa-bhāge, vrajajana anurāge,
kare kṛṣṇa-līlā nirantara
tāhāra virāma nāī, sei nitya-līlā bhāī,
brahma-rudra-śeṣa-agocara*

Nirantara-nitya-līlā is performed incessantly in eight time divisions throughout the entire day and night. These sports are motivated by His pure loving affection for the residents of Vraja, and these pastimes do not stop even for a second—therefore it is called *nitya-līlā*. Oh brothers! These eight-fold daily pastimes (*aṣṭa-kālīya-nitya-līlā*) are imperceptible even for Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, and Lord Ananta-śeṣa.

Siddhi-lālasā
gauḍa-vraja-jane, bheda nā dekhiba
haibo varaja-vāsī
dhāmera svarūpa, sphuribe nayane
haibo rādhāra dāsī

I shall see no distinction between the residents of Gauḍa and those of Vraja, and will thus become a true Vrajavāsī myself. The transcendental form of the *dhāma* will appear to my vision, and I shall become a maidservant of Śrī Rādhā.

By not having *darśana* of Rādhavana in Gauravana, the servitude of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī (*rādhā-dāsyam*) cannot be attained. Thus, this is the ultimate realization of Gauravana in one's heart.

Those who have the factual *darśana* of Vraja, will never have to helplessly behold the world of matter again.

dekhite dekhite, bhulibo va kabe,
nīja sthūla paricaya
nayane heribo, vraja-pura śobhā,
nitya cid-ānanda-maya

When, before my very sight, will my bodily self-conception disappear? Then, with my own eyes I shall behold the exquisite beauty of Vraja, full of eternal spiritual cognizance and bliss.

In the eighth *kīrtana* of *Gītāmālā's Siddhi-lālasā*, while describing his *svarūpa*, associates (*svagāra*), *svanāma* (name), *svasevā* (service), and other details, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says:

varaṇe tadit vāsa tārāvalī
kamala mañjarī nāma
sāde-bāra varṣa vayasa satata
svānanda sukhada dhāma

This maidservant has a complexion just like lightning, and she is wearing a *sārī* which has star-like patterns all over it. My name is Kamala-mañjarī. Eternally appearing to be only twelve-and-a-half years of age, I always live within the abode of Svānanda-sukhada-kuṇja.

karpūra sevā lalitāra gaṇa
rādhā yūtheśvarī hana
mameśvarī-nātha śrī nanda-nandana
āmāra parāṇa dhana

I render the service of preparing camphor within the group of Lalitā-sakhī. Śrī Rādhā is the leader of our group, and the center of all our activities. And the Lord of my Queen Rādhā is the delightful Son of Nanda Mahārāja, Who is the treasure of my life.

Those offenders of Śrī Guru who falsely confess to have obtained their eternal spiritual forms say, "Since Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written down details of his *siddha-svarūpa*, those who imitate him and preach in the open marketplace about *siddha-praṇālī* (one's spiritual form) cannot be called offenders. Such activities cannot be counted as offenses." It is necessary for these *guru-aparādhīs* to realize that in the same *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has prayed to the lotus feet of his *guru-sakhī* (the form of Śrī Guru as an intimate maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā) to attain his *nija-svarasikhi* (natural eternal mellow):

*sakhīra caraṇe kabe karibe ākūti
sakhī kṛpā kari dibe svārasiki sthiti*

When will I ever become intensely eager to serve the lotus feet of a *sakhī*? When will my service-attitude make her so obliged that she will mercifully bestow upon me my own natural eternal mellow and position?

*kabe vā e dāsī, samsiddhi labhibe,
rādhā-kuṇḍe vāsa kari'
rādhā-kṛṣṇa-sevā, satata karibe,
pūrva smṛti parihari'*

When will this maidservant thus attain such completely fulfilled spiritual perfection, living by the banks of Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa? I will eternally serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and all of my previous memories will be long since forgotten.

To forget one's past memories and history, and to cultivate one-pointed greed for *svarasikhi-sthiti*, while intently praying to Śrī Gurudeva for his mercy is very commendable. But to proclaim

that "Gurudeva has given me *siddha-praṇālī*, my name is such and such *mañjari*," and to speak such words with the intention of earning prestige, which is likened to stool, is greatly reprehensible. By achieving *siddha-praṇālī* in the real sense, a sincere disciple becomes *guru-preṣṭha* (very dear to Śrī Guru). *Anarthas* like *viṣaya-pipāsā* (the thirst for sense enjoyment), *puruṣa-abhimāna* (the conception of being an enjoyer), and *mātsaryatā* (envy) are conspicuous by their absence in the heart of such a *sādhaka*. Such a *sādhaka* never thinks of his Gurudeva as being a member of a particular caste or creed. Attachment to wife and children can never remain in the heart of such a disciple. It is an offense to consider oneself to be like Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and imitate his preaching in this world.

In his *kīrtanas*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has never transgressed the words of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the foremost follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Rather, he has followed every word of his. This is especially seen in how Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura composed his *kīrtanas* in strict accordance with Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's *Bhakti-sandarbha*. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī Prabhu has told everyone that:

atra ca śrī guroḥ śrī bhāgavato vā prasādalābdham
sādhana-sādhyagatam svīya sarvasva-bhūtam yat kim
api rahasyam tat tu na kaśmaicit prakāśanīyam yathā-
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (8.17.20)

naitat parasmā ākhyeyam
prṣṭayāpi kathañcana
sarvam sampadyate devī
deva-guhyam susamūrtam

Bhakti-sandarbha 339

"Whatever confidential experiences are attained in connection with the practice and the goal given by the grace of Śrī Guru or Śrī Bhagavān, and that are one's very own treasure, should not be revealed to anyone. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavata* Śrī Viṣṇu tells Śrī Aditī-devī, "O Devī, whatever secrets I have told you, should never be revealed to anyone, even if someone inquires after it. All secrets of the gods in the sky will yield fruit only when kept a secret."

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *svarasikhi-siddhi* is greatly astonishing. His desires, which he expressed in his *siddhi-lālasā* prayers as well as in his prayers of intense longing and greed, manifested themselves as prayers of perfection when Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was absorbed in rendering his services in the eternal world.

In the sixth *kīrtana* of his *Siddhi-lālasā*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings:

*sākṣāt darśana madhyāhna līlāya
rādhā-pada-sevārthīnī
jakhana ye sevā karaha yatane
śrī rādhā-carane dhāni*

Seeing Them personally coming and performing Their midday pastimes there at Rādhā-kūḍā, I have become very much desirous to serve the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā. And whenever I get the opportunity to render some small service, I will perform that service with the greatest care and attention, and thus I will become enriched with the treasure of Her lotus feet.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura entered the midday pastimes in Śrī Godruma, the abode that is non-different from Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa. In his *Navadvīpa-ṣaṭaka*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks the following words:

*rādhā-kuṇḍa śrī-godrume śrī-rādhāra saha
vihāra-samaye tava pada-padme laha*

O Lord who enjoys pastimes at Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa in Śrī Godrumadvīpa, please forcibly attract my heart with Your own potencies, and place it under the shelter of Your lotus feet.

BĀULA-SAṄGĪTA

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura authored many simple, yet very instructive *kīrtanas* for ordinary people. These *kīrtanas* conquered the opposing views of *asat-siddhānta* and *asat-saṅga*. His *Bāul-saṅgīta* and *Dālālera-gītā* constitute such *kīrtanas*.

During that time, the province of Bengal was resounding with the songs of *Bāul-saṅgīta*. *Bāul-saṅgīta* was respected by even those who belonged to the new generation, that is, the generation educated according to Western standards. *Bāul-saṅgīta*, which is imbued with logic and instructions, is especially helpful for those who are illiterate and prefer to speak in simple, village dialect. But the ordinary masses are bewildered by the various melodies and colorful language of *Bāul-saṅgīta*, as they cannot perceive its underlying false ideas, which are offensive to the lotus feet of Bhakti-devī. Some of these false notions are contrary to the established conclusions of *tattva* (*tattva-virodha*)

and are an overlapping of *rasas* (*rasābhāsa*). They also propound *sambhogavāda* (material enjoyment) and *Māyāvāda*. The ordinary masses, however, cannot understand how such poison is a mixture of many offenses committed at the lotus feet of Bhakti-devī.

Rather than making its listeners become transcendently delirious in facilitating Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment (who is the Infallible Supreme Enjoyer), such *Bāul-saṅgīta*, since time immemorial, has made the conditioned residents of this world become engrossed in pursuing gross and subtle sense enjoyment. Ordinary people cannot understand that the prevalent *Bāul-saṅgīta* in today's society only propounds the notion of *sambhoga-vāda* in the name of *bhakti*. The illicit mood of imitating the Supreme Enjoyer Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which is the apex of atheism, has hidden itself to the eyes of ordinary masses. Therefore, they cannot understand how such songs are directly opposed to devotion.

An intoxicated elephant is controlled by having a female elephant attract it. Similarly, to engage the conditioned souls (who are intoxicated by mundane enjoyment) in the causeless service of *suddha* Bhakti-devī, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura (who becomes distressed upon seeing the sorrow of others) composed the *kīrtanas* of his *Bāul-saṅgīta* and *Nāma-haṭṭera Dālāla*. This is the unprecedented gift of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura for the ordinary, bewildered masses.

In *Bāul-saṅgīta*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura presents himself as "Cāṇḍ Bāul." This Cāṇḍ Bāul has become greatly intoxicated and transcendently euphoric by serving Śrī Nītaicāṇḍa and Śrī Gauracāṇḍa. Indeed, such service has made him 'mad.' He has thus become the guardian and preceptor (*mahājana*) of the empire of the Bhaktisiddhānta that has been established by Śrī Gaura-Nītāi.

Cāñd Bāul gives these instructions to the Bāuls, who are madly inebriated by their material enjoyment, by the medium of his *Bāula-saṅgīta*:

*'bāul bāul' bolche sabe, hocche bāul kon janā
dādi-cūḍā dekhiye (o bhāi) korche jīvake vāñcanā*

Everyone keeps using the word “Bāul, Bāul” as a cheap label, but who has actually become a Bāul (a pure devotee gone mad in genuine ecstatic love of God)? By merely exhibiting a long beard and a topknot upon your head, O brothers, you thus cheat many people.

*deha-tattva-jāḍera tattva,
tā' te ki chāḍāy māyār gartta,
cidānanda paramārtha, jānte to tāy pārbe nā*

Your philosophy of *deha-tattva*—that the material body is supposedly divine—is simply a philosophy of dull matter (*jāḍa-tattva*). By maintaining such a doctrine, is it possible to become freed from the womb of *māyā*? The supreme goal of life is the attainment of eternally conscious bliss (*cidānanda*). Although you understand this well, you will still be unable to enter transcendence.

*jadi bāul cāo re ho' te, tabe calo dharma-pathe,
yośit-saṅga sarva-mate chāḍo re maner vāsanā*

Oh! If you really want to become a genuine Bāul (a transcendental madman), then please proceed on the path of religiosity. Oh! Just abandon in all ways the mind's craving for the inappropriate company of women.

*veṣa-bhūṣā-raṅga jata, chādi' nāme hao re rata,
nitāi-cāṅder anugata, hao chādi' sab durvāsanā*

Oh! Abandoning the performance of adorning yourself with dramatic clothing and ornaments in imitation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, may you become attached to chanting His pure holy name. May you become the loyal follower of Nitāicāṅda, thereby renouncing all evil obsessions.

*mukhe 'hare kṛṣṇa' bolo, chādo re bhāi kathār chala,
nām vinā to' su-sambala, cāṅda-bāul ār dekhe nā*

O my dear brothers! Completely giving up your clever manipulative speech, just fill your mouths with the chanting of "Hare Kṛṣṇa!" Cāṅd Bāul sees no means of support other than the abundant resource of the Lord's holy name.

It is the *nitya-siddha-svabhāva* (eternally perfect nature) of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to instruct everyone on *sambandha-tattva-jñāna*. He has not renounced this nature of his even while composing these Bāul *kīrtanas*. He has preached the *siddhānta* of *śuddha-bhakti* through words like *deha-tattva-jadera-tattva*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has sung all these songs of *Bāula-sarīgīta* to reveal the hypocrisy of Bāuls to the society at large. On the pretext of chanting the holy name, the Bāuls are only engaged in cultivating illicit association with the opposite sex. Thus, their aim is to only enjoy the body, which is made of flesh and blood.

Āul, Bāul, Karttā-bhajā, Neḍā, Dara-veṣa, Sakhībhekī, Smārtā, Sāi, Sahajiyā, Jāta-gosāi, Atibādi, Cūḍa-dhārī, Gaurāṅga-nāgarī, and other *prākṛta-sahajīya* lines are composed of offenders who are *sambhogavādīs* and *Māyāvādīs*. They are the agents of

Kali. They are greatly atheistic and against the transcendental views of the *mahājanas*, *sat-śāstras*, *bhaktisiddhānta*, pure observance of devotion (*ācāra*), and proper consideration on the limbs of devotion (*vicāra*). Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has shown these mistaken ideologies of the Bāuls in his *kīrtanas* that are authored in very simple language. He has corrected them by his transcendental logic. Thus, he has showered his mercy upon those who are of weak faith and have chosen to turn away from the real path of eternal auspiciousness.

Some people subscribe to the idea that it is sufficient to chant within one's mind or by using the *manera-mālā* (the *japa* strand within the mind). They say, "There is no need to chant *harināma* on beads. Indeed, there is no need to follow any limb of *bhakti*. All our exchanges will take place externally, but all our spiritual activities will manifest on the inside, within our minds."

Some also say:

*mālā jape sālā, kara jape bhāi
jo man man jape, usko balihāri jāī*

With the intention of exposing and ridding the world of such lines of thought, which are verily composed of sin, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings these *kīrtanas* as 'Cāṇḍ Bāul'.

*maner mālā japavi jakhan, māna,
keno karabi bāhya visarjana
mane mane bhajana jakhana haya
prema uthle pade' bāhya-dehe vyāpta haye raya;
ābār dehe care, japāy kore, dharāy mālā anukṣaṇa*

My dear mind, when you chant *japa* on the *mālā* within your mind, why do you cease the actions of chanting *japa* externally? When one performs *bhajana* within the mind, and *prema* factually arises internally, then the external body also becomes pervaded by those symptoms. Therefore the body rocks and sways, while one incessantly turns their beads in chanting *japa*.

*je vyāṭā bhaṇḍa-tāpasa haya,
baka-bidāla dekhā'ye bāhya ninde atiśaya;
nije juta pe'le kāminī-kanaka kore sadā saṅghaṭana*

This improper form of mental chanting is the tendency of the pretentious so-called renunciants. As displayed in the fables of the crane and cat, such renunciation is extremely contemptible. Although such a trait is shown externally, whenever one gains an opportunity to enjoy women and wealth he continually indulges.

*se vyāṭār bhitora phakkākār,
bāhya-sādhana-nindā roi ār āche kivā tā'r;
(nijera) māna bhālo dekhā-te giye ninde sādhu-ācarāṇa*

Inside such a man is merely an empty cavity of deceit. What does he have to express other than direct blasphemy of the process of executing external *sādhana-bhakti*? He thus makes a show of his own mental concoctions as being supposedly 'superior' while he openly condemns the activities of the true *sādhus*.

*śuddha kari' bhītara bāhira, bhāi,
hari-nāma karate thāko, tarke kāj nāi,*

(śuṣka) tomāra tarka karate jīvana ghāre
cāñda-bāul tāya duḥkhī hana

O dear brother! Purify yourself both internally and externally. Stay engaged in chanting *harināma* instead of simply babbling stubbornly with controversial attitudes. When you pass your life consumed with dry arguments, then Cāñd Bāul becomes very sad.

On one hand, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has chastised those who are excessively attached to their body and home. On the other hand, he has also strongly chastised the unqualified, and artificially renounced Bāuls:

keno bhekera prayāsa?
haya akāla-bheke sarva-nāśa
hale citta-śuddhi, tattva-buddhi,
bheka āpani ese' haya prakāśa

Why do you have so much desire for changing clothes? By prematurely changing clothes from those of a householder to those of a renunciant (*sannyāsa*), all is destroyed. Only when one's consciousness is first purified, then the intelligence perceives transcendental truth, and finally the change of clothes will automatically come and be manifest in its time.

bheka dhori' ceṣṭā kore, bheker jvālāya śeṣe mare,
nedānēdī chaḍāchaḍī, ākhaḍā beṇḍhe' vāsa;
akāla-kuṣmāṇḍa, jata bhaṇḍa, karache jīvera sarva-nāśa

But when one makes an artificial endeavor to put on the clothes of an ascetic (*bābājī-veṣa*), then ultimately one

perishes in the fever of that improper dress. Thus one becomes known as a member of the sect called Nedā-Nedī, going about the town begging alms and living at the meeting place called Ākhara. Such a worthless person, just like a pumpkin grown uselessly at an unsuitable time of year, finally destroys everything that would be good for their own soul.

*śuka, nārada, catuḥsana, bhekera adhikārī hana,
tāder samāna pāra le hate bheke karabe āśa;
bolo temana buddhi, citta-śuddhi
ka'jana dharāya karache vāsa?*

The great sages Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Nārada Muni, and the Four Kumāras are truly qualified to wear the dress of renunciants. One may desire to wear a dress similar to theirs as soon as one becomes as renounced as they are. Tell me, who can develop the intelligence and purified heart of these great sages merely by wearing a particular garment?

*ātmānātma-suviveke, prema-latāśa citta-bheke,
bhajana-sādhana-vāriseke karaha ullāsa;
cāndā-bāula bale, emana ha'le, ha'te pārbe kṛṣṇa-dās*

In full knowledge of what is the soul and what is not of the soul, wearing the dress of a renunciant within your heart, just make your creeper of *prema* bloom by sprinkling it with the rainfall of *bhajana-sādhana*. Cānd Bāul says, "When this occurs, then you will actually become Lord Kṛṣṇa's servant."

At the start of *Bāul-saṅgīta*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who becomes greatly distressed upon seeing the plight of others, speaks the following words:

āmi tomāra duḥkhera duḥkhī sukhera sukhī,
tāi tomāre boli bhāi re
nitāi-er hāṭe giye (ore o bhāi)
nāma enechi tomāra tare

I am your ever well-wisher. I become sad when you are sad, and I become happy when you are happy. This I sincerely proclaim to you, dear brothers! Having gone shopping at Lord Nityānanda's Marketplace, O brothers, I have brought back the holy names of the Lord just for your benefit.

gaura-candra-mārkā karā, e hari-nāma rase bharā,
nāme nāmī paḍache dharā, lao yadi vadana bhare'

Being marked with the symbol of Lord Gauracandra, this *harināma* is succulent with divine mellows. If you would please take the holy name and always fill your mouths with it, then you shall realize that the name fully contains the Lord who is named.

āmi kāṅgāla artha-hīna, nāma enechi kare' ḥna,
dekhe āmāya ati dīna, śraddhā-mūlye deo dhare'

I myself am now quite wretched and indeed destitute, for by arranging to bring the Lord's holy name here I have fallen into great debt. Seeing me as a soul stricken with extreme poverty, please hand over to me the price of your faith.

mūlyā laye tomāra thāi, mahā-janake dibo, bhāi,
je kichu tāya lābha pāi, rākhabo nijera bhāṇḍāre

Taking your payment, O brothers, I will pass it along to the *mahājana* (the proprietor, Lord Nityānanda.) Whatever small

commission I may earn by conducting this transaction will be kept in my own storeroom.

nāma vinā āra sakala phāñki, chāyābājī e samsāre

Other than the holy name of the Lord, all else in this world is simply false, like the illusions of a shadow-theater!

*dharma-pathe thāki' karo jīvana jāpana, bhāi
hari-nāma koro sadā (ore o bhāi) hari vinā bandhu nāi*
O my dear brothers! Just pass your lives by adhering to the proper path of religiosity. Constantly chant *harināma*. O brothers, for other than Lord Hari, you have no friend.

*yoṣit-saṅga-arta-lobhe, maje to' jīva citta-kṣobhe,
bāule ki se-saba śobhe, āguna dekhe' phaḍīn mare*

The heart of the *jīva* becomes greatly agitated by absorption in the association of materialistic women, as well as greed for wealth—does a true Bāul become attracted by the glitter of these worldly things? A cricket is attracted by a flame and jumps straight into it, thereby meeting death.

Places of intoxication, gambling, slaughter, gold, and women are places of Kali. A person who desires them is a servant of Kali.

*jata-dina hṛday-śodhana naya,
ghara chādle pare 'markaṭa-vairāgī' tā're kay;
hṛdaya-doṣe ripura boṣe, pade pade tāra patana*

One who renounces his home while his heart is not yet purified is called a '*markaṭa-vairāgī*' (monkey-like renunciant). The heart of such a person is diseased and beset by

many offenses. Acting under the control of the enemy, which are the senses, he wanders from house to house while being greedy to accumulate wealth. Therefore, he sinks lower and lower at every step.

NĀMAHATĀ AND DĀLĀLERA-GĀNA

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura opened the *nāmahatā* (marketplace of the holy name) to preach *śuddha-bhakti* in simple language to society at large. And then, he introduced himself as a sweeper of this marketplace. Introducing himself as such, he had preachers visit many villages and preach the essence of the Vedas, Vedānta, and the *Bhāgavata*. A renowned scholarly personality like Śaṅkarācārya hid the real meaning of the Veda-Vedānta and didn't preach the essence to the residents of this world. Therefore, *ācāryas* like Śrī Rāmānujācārya, Viṣṇusvāmī, Madhvācārya, and Nimbārka authored many books and commentaries on the Vedānta and other scriptures, and presented the essence of all teachings for the welfare of everyone. To distribute the essence of all teachings in simple language to the ordinary masses, the dear associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, opened the *nāmahatā*.

Although some of the previous *ācāryas* composed many *kīrtanas*, these *kīrtanas* lacked instructions for present times, and they didn't especially propound the logic that subdued the illegitimate lines of thought. Many deviant philosophies, illicit practices, and offenses were being broadcasted as *vaiṣṇava-dharma* to everyone. Some of the *kīrtanas* didn't especially speak of the *sambandha-jñāna* that was required to overcome these erroneous views.

Upon opening the marketplace of the holy name (*nāma-haṭṭa*), Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura cast all the obstacles that Vaiṣṇava society faced on one side. On another side, he instructed everyone on the teachings of *suddha-bhakti*. The *svarūpa* and service of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *nāma-haṭṭa* has been told in the following *kīrtana*:

*nadīyā-godrume nityānanda mahājana
pātiyāche nāma-haṭṭa jīvera kāraṇa*

On the island of Godruma in the land of Nadīyā, the magnanimous personality Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu has opened a marketplace of the holy name for the benefit of all living beings.

*(śraddhāvān jana he, śraddhāvān jana he)
prabhura ājñāya, bhāi, māgi ei bhikṣā
bolo kṛṣṇa, bhajo kṛṣṇa, karo kṛṣṇa śikṣā*

[There, He calls out,] ("O persons of faith, O persons of faith!) On the order of Śrī Gaurāṅga, O brothers, I beg these alms from you: chant the names of Kṛṣṇa, worship Kṛṣṇa, and follow the instructions of Kṛṣṇa.

*aparādha-śūnya ha'ye laho kṛṣṇa-nāma
kṛṣṇa mātā, kṛṣṇa pitā, kṛṣṇa dhana-prāṇa*

"Being free of offenses, chant the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is our mother, Kṛṣṇa is our father, and Kṛṣṇa is the treasure of our life.

*kṛṣṇera samsāra karo chādi' anācāra
jīve dayā, kṛṣṇa-nāma—sarva-dharma-sāra*

"Give up all sinful behavior and live your life with Kṛṣṇa at the center. The essence of all forms of religion is to show compassion upon all living beings and chant the holy names of Kṛṣṇa."

Ordinary people can understand the meaning of words like *hatṭa* (market), *mahājana*, *dālāla* (an agent), *dasturi* (commission), *jamādara* (treasurer), *mātā* (mother), *pītā* (father), *dhana* (wealth), *prāṇa* (life), and *saṁsāra*. Thus, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura (who is most compassionate) gave many instructions on *bhakti-siddhānta* and *bhajana-rahasya* through the medium of these words.

Instructions given on the pretext of distributing money and rice don't convey the message of one's eternal wellbeing.

In the fourth section of *Vaiṣṇava-siddhānta-mālā*—the *Nāma-tattva-Śikṣāṣṭaka* section—Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura published the *kīrtanas* he had written on the *Śikṣāṣṭaka*. At the end of performing *kīrtanas*, when the chanting and dancing is concluded, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura instructs everyone to loudly say the following *jaya-dhvani*:

Jaya Śrī Godruma-Candra Goracanda Kī Jaya!
Jaya Premadātā Śrī Nityānanda Kī Jaya!
Jaya Śrī Śāntipuranātha Kī Jaya!
Jaya Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita Gosvāmī Kī Jaya!
Jaya Śrī Śrīvāsādi Bhaktavṛnda Kī Jaya!
Jaya Śrī Navadvīpa dhāma Kī Jaya!
Jaya Śrī Namahaṭṭa Kī Jaya!
Jaya Śrī Śrotāvarga Kī Jaya!
Śrī Śrī Nāmhaṭṭera Parimārjjaka Jhādudār
Dīna-hīna Śrī Kedāranātha Bhaktivinoda

All glories to the moon of Godruma, Gauracanda!
All glories to the giver of divine love, Śrī Nityānanda!
All glories to the Lord of Śāntipura!
All glories to Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita Gosvāmī!
All glories to Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita and the assembly of devotees!
All glories to the divine abode of Navadvīpa!
All glories to the Marketplace of the Holy Name!
All glories to the listeners of the Holy Name!
Signed, the cleaner and sweeper of the Marketplace of
the Holy Name, the lowly and destitute Śrī Kedāranātha
Bhaktivinoda.

There is an essay called 'Nāma-pracāra' in the *Vaiṣṇava-siddhānta-mālā*. At the conclusion of 'ajñā-tahala,' the inauguration of the *nāmahaṭṭa* has been announced to the faithful masses. Some *nagara-saṅkīrtana kīrtanas* were also presented during this time. At the conclusion of these *kīrtanas*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has presented the following *Prema-dhvani*:

*Prema se kaho śrī kṛṣṇa-caitanya-nityānanda-
advaita-gadādhara-śrīvāsa-paṇḍita kī jaya!*
*Śrī Antardvīpa-māyāpura, Sīmanta, Godruma,
Madhyadvīpa, Koladvīpa, R̥tudvīpa, Jahnudvīpa,
Modadruma, Rudradvīpātmaka*
Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma kī jaya!
*Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-Gopa-Gopī-Go-Govardhana-
Vṛndāvana-Rādhā-kunda-Yamunājī kī jaya!*
Śrī Tulasī-devī kī jaya!
Śrī Gaṅgājī kī jaya!

Srī Surabhi-kuñja kī jaya!

Srī Nāmahaṭṭa kī jaya!

Srī Bhakti-devī kī jaya!

Srī Gāyaka, Srotā, Bhakta-vṛnda kī jaya!

With love, say, "All glories to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, Śrī Nityānanda, Śrī Advaita Ācārya, Śrī Gadādhara Prabhu, Śrīvāsa Pañḍita!"

All glories to the nine islands of Navadvīpa—Sīmanta, Godruma, Madhyadvīpa, Koladvīpa, R̄tudvīpa, Jahnudvīpa, Modadruma, Rudradvīpa, and Māyāpura!

All glories to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa, the cowherd boys and cowherd girls, the cows, Govardhana Hill, Vṛndāvana, Rādhā-kuṇḍa, and the River Yamunā!

All glories to Tulasī Devī! All Glories to Gaṅgā-devī! All glories to Surabhi-kuñja! All Glories to the Marketplace of the Holy Name! All glories to Bhakti-devī, the deity of devotional service!

All glories to singers, listeners, and the devotees!

The aforementioned *Dālālera-gītā* was published in the fifth section of *Vaiṣṇava-siddhānta-mālā*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has described the extraordinary setting of this *kīrtana* in the following way:

*bado sukher khabor gāi
surabhi-kuñjete nāmera hāṭa khuleche khodā-nitāi*

I am singing news of great happiness! At Surabhi-kuñja, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu has opened a marketplace of the holy name.

*bado mojār kathā tāy
śraddhā-mūlye śuddha-nām sei hātete bikāy*

It is a matter of great bliss that He is selling the pure holy name at that marketplace for merely the price of one's faith.

*jato bhakta-vṛnda vasi'
adhibārī dekhe' nāma becche daro kaśi*

After examining the qualification of everyone in the assembly of devotees waiting to purchase the holy name, He bargains for the proper price with each person.

*jadi nāma kinbe bhāi
āmār saṅge calo mahājaner kāche jāi*

My dear brothers, if you want to purchase the pure holy name, then come with me to meet this magnanimous personality.

*tumi kinbe krṣṇa-nām
dasturi laibo āmi, pūrṇa ha'be kām*

You will purchase the pure holy name, I shall take my due commission, and all our desires will be fulfilled.

*bado dayāl nityānanda
śraddhā-mātra la'ye dena parama ānanda*

Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu is extraordinarily merciful. Merely for the price of one's faith, He bestows the topmost divine bliss.

*ek-bār dekhle cakṣe jal
gaura bo'le nitāi dena sakala sambal*

If Nitāi only once sees tears welling in the eyes of someone chanting the name of Gaura, He gives His full support to that person.

*dena śuddha kṛṣṇa-śikṣā
jāti, dhana, vidyā-bala nā kare apekṣā*

He gives that person genuine teachings about Śrī Kṛṣṇa, not imposing any conditions in regard to caste, wealth, or strength of knowledge.

*amani chāde māyā-jāl
grhe thāko, vane thāko, nā thāke jañjāl*

The snares of *māyā* are immediately released, so one may remain either at home [as a householder] or in the forest [as a renunciant], for no more troubles remain.

*āra nāiko kalir bhay
ācāñdāle dena nāma nitāi dayāmay*

There is no longer any need to fear the age of Kali, for the munificent Nitāi gives the holy name to everyone—even to the lowest among men.

*bhaktivinoda dāki' kay
nitāi-cānder caraṇ vinā ār nāhi āśray*

Bhaktivinoda loudly proclaims to all, "Besides the lotus feet of Śrī Nitāi-Candra, there is no other shelter!"

In this *kīrtana*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks on how Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu has opened a marketplace of the holy name in Godruma's Surabhi-kuṇja. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura identifies himself as an agent of this marketplace. He has thus urged everyone to buy the holy name for the price of their faith. Nityānanda Prabhu's mercy is attained by having the *jīvas* practice *hari-bhajana*, and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks of this mercy as his commission (*dasturi*).

Just as Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura opened the *nāmahaṭṭa* for everyone, he similarly re-established the Viśva-vaiṣṇava-rājya-sabhbā that was previously established by Śrīla Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī themselves. In the Year 1292 Baṅgābda, on the day of 30 Vaiśākha, this Viśva-vaiṣṇava-rājya-sabhbā was again established in Kolkāta. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was the presiding chairman of this glorious assembly.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura tirelessly endeavored to preach the pure line of *bhaktisiddhānta* to the faithful, and even to those who held the conception of being Vaiṣṇavas. His only aim was to secure the eternal auspiciousness of everyone. Indeed, it wouldn't be incorrect to say that no one can even count how many times he endeavored to fulfil this desire of his. The *kīrtanas* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura are likened to a garland of *siddhānta* that the Vaiṣṇavas always wear (*Vaiṣṇava-siddhānta-mālā*). Such a contribution is indeed unparalleled.

To attract everyone to their eternal, innate *nitya-dharma*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura showered all with the nectar of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's instructions (*Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta*). He composed his *Nāmahaṭṭa kīrtanas* to make everyone immortal by making them fit recipients of the nectar of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's instructions.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura published many *kīrtanas* for the various services of *nāmahaṭṭa*. It is known by reading his *Sajjana Tosanī* that Vardhamān's Āmlā-jodā residents, Kṣetranātha Bhaktinidhi and Vipinabihārī Bhaktiratna Mahāśaya, became the *Nāmahaṭṭa*'s 'Daṇḍidara' (disciplinarian) and 'Vipanipati' (business dealer). Other devotees became the *Nāmahaṭṭa*'s 'Vrājacakrapani'

(distributor), 'Jamādāra' (cleaner), and 'Saharatkārī' (helper). Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura considered himself to be the sweeper of this Nāmahaṭṭa. He took it upon himself to cleanse the *jīvas* of all their offenses, *anarthas*, and other unwanted tendencies. Has such a merciful and empathetic personality like him ever appeared in recent times?

One day, Vāsudeva Datta spoke the following words to Śrīman Mahāprabhu:

*jīvera pāpa laiyā muñi karoñ naraka bhoga
sakala jīvera, prabhu, ghucāha bhāva-roga*

Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 15.163

"My dear Lord, let me suffer perpetually in a hellish condition, accepting all the sinful reactions of all living entities. Please finish their diseased material life."

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura embodied the same mood of Śrīla Vāsudeva Datta by addressing himself as the sweeper of the Nāmahaṭṭa. In the temple of Nāma Prabhu, the conditioned souls haven't been able to relieve themselves of their *anarthas* and offenses. Therefore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has a broom, which has a hundred stiff fibres. He has committed himself to fully cleanse the *jīvas* of all their unwanted tendencies. Therefore, the non-different manifestation of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura—that is, *oṁ viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura*—has written the following words:

"By addressing himself as the sweeper of the Nāmahaṭṭa, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has manifested the pastimes of the eternal realm. Hundreds of us with hundreds of mouths will

follow the *mahājanas* and convey their message to everyone we meet. We will present ourselves as the brooms that the *mahājanas* use in their pastime of cleansing everyone's hearts. By their causeless mercy, the *jīvas'* aversion to *kṛṣṇa-sevā* is removed at the root. We will preach their transcendental *aprākṛta hari-katha* everywhere and we will try our best to save the faithful from wicked association. Our service may seem unpalatable for the residents of this world, but this very service will bestow ultimate auspiciousness upon us."

ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA THĀKURA'S TRANSLATIONS

In his *Bhajana-rahasya*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has translated many *ślokas* of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha and the other *ācāryas* into Bengali. He has also translated the *ślokas* of many other scriptures.

Although many *ācāryas* of the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava *saṃpradāya* have written numerous *kīrtanas*, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Thākura's *Prārthanā* and *Prema-bhakti-candrikā kīrtanas* are especially distinct. The sweetness, beauty, and munificence of these *kīrtanas* of Śrīla Narottama dāsa Thākura are seen in Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura's *kīrtanas*. Their oneness of heart is especially glorious. Therefore, in the second *kīrtana* of his *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru's Lālasamayī* section, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura sings:

*kabe narottama-saha sāksāt haibe
kabe vā prārthanā-rasa citte praveśibe*

When will I ever be able to come into the very presence of Śrīla Narottama dāsa Thākura, and when will the mellow he expressed in his book *Prārthanā* enter into my heart?

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura have manifested the pure *bhakti-siddhānta* of the Svarūpa-Rūpānuga line in very simple, heart-touching *kīrtanas*. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has delineated the philosophy of this line in a concise manner. But Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has described the underlying precepts of this line from various angles, and he has done so while following the *siddhānta* of the previous *ācāryas*. His *kīrtanas* are seen as commentaries to Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura's *prārthanā* and *Prema-bhakti-candrikā* prayers.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Śaraṇāgati*, *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*, *Gītāvalī*, and *Gītāmālā* prayers have been published as *kīrtanas* that expound the teachings of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *Śiksāṣṭaka* and the teachings contained in the books written by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Jīva Gosvāmī, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Prabhu, and the other Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *kīrtanas* wonderfully compliment the *bhakti-siddhānta* embodied by the books of the *ācāryas*.

In every *kīrtana* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, his nature of empathy, which is greatly astonishing, is seen. His sadness upon seeing the sorrow of others is seen in many of his *kīrtanas*. By his *kīrtanas*, he reaches the innermost core of the hearts of the *anartha*-stricken *jīvas* and makes their hearts immaculately clean. He even performs 'operations' to achieve his cause.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura manifested a mine of invaluable gems by authoring *kīrtanas* that not only express the moods of the highest form of devotion, but also embody the sublime

philosophical principles of Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy. By his prose and poetry, he initiated the flow of the Rūpānuga Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas who continuously worship Śrī Gaurasundara, His abode (*gaura-dhāma*), and His name.

In his *Siddhi-lālasā* prayers, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura ensured the auspiciousness of all the *jīvas* by praying how a *sādhaka* should do. Although he is an eternal associate of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, he still maintained this conception of being a *sādhaka* in many of his *kīrtanas*. Despite being an eternal associate of their Lordships, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura never said, "I am a perfect personality." Rather, he prayed, "I am a *sādhaka*; when will my services attain perfection?" This ideal mood is seen in all his *kīrtanas*.

"Gurudeva has awarded *siddha-praṇālī* to me; I am a perfected soul; I am a high class of a personality," such a desire for prestige will utterly destroy one. This warning is seen in many of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *kīrtanas*.

By studying Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura's *Prārthanā*, and *Prema-bhakti-candrikā* prayers, while simultaneously also studying Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *kīrtanas*, the *rūpānugatva* (the mood of being a follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī) of the two *ācāryas* is equally seen. For instance, in one of his *Svābhīṣṭa-lālasā* prayers of *Prārthanā*, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has sung:

*hari hari! āra ki emona daśā habo
chādiyā puruṣa deha, kabe vā prakṛti habo
duhu arīge candana parābo*

When, relinquishing this male material body and obtaining the spiritual body of a *gopī*, will I anoint the limbs of the

Divine Couple with sandalwood paste? O Lord Hari, Lord Hari, when will this day be mine?

Following in Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura's footsteps, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sang in his *Śaraṇāgati*:

*chodata puruṣa abhimāna
kiñkarī hailu āji kāna
varaja-vipine sakhi-sātha
sevana karābu rādhānātha*

"O Kana, by abandoning the ego that I am the enjoyer, today I have become Your maidservant. O Rādhānātha, in the forest of Vraja, in the company of the *sakhīs*, I will serve You."

Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura has sung:

*mallikā mālatī juthi nana phule mālā ganthi
kabe diba doñhāra galāya*

Prārthanā 15

When will I string garlands of *mallikā* and *mālatī* flowers and place them on the necks of the Divine Couple?

Correspondingly, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, having accepted the guidance of a *guru-rūpa-sakhī*, has sung the followings words, while making Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura's mood all the more clearer:

*kusume gāñthabuñ hāra
tulasī-maṇi-maṇjarī tāra*

I will string together a garland of forest flowers, in which *tulasī* buds shall be the jewelled pendants.

*jatane deobuṇ sakhi-kare
hāte laobo sakhi ādare*

With utmost care I will place the garland in the hands of my superior *sakhi*, and she will take it out of my hands with loving regard.

*sakhi dibo tuyā duhuka gale
dūrata herabuṇ kutuhale*

Then she will place the garland around both of Your necks, while from afar I watch in wonder.

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has sung on the glories of the water that has washed the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas in the following way:

*vaiṣṇava-caraṇa-jala, prema-bhakti dite bala,
āra keha nahe balavanta
vaiṣṇava-caraṇa-reṇu, mastake bhūṣaṇa vinu,
āra nāhi bhūṣaṇera anta*

There is nothing more powerful than water that has washed the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava to give the strength to attain *prema-bhakti*. There is no greater ornament than the dust of the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava to serve as the ornament for one's head.

And this *kīrtana* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura corresponds exactly to this mood of desiring to attain the foot dust of a pure devotee:

*śuddha-bhakata-, caraṇa-reṇu, bhajana-anukūla
bhakata-sevā, parama-siddhi, prema-latikāra mūla*

Dust from the lotus feet of the pure devotees is most favorable for *bhajana*. Service to the pure devotees is the highest perfection and the very root of the creeper of *prema*.

Gaurajana Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has sung:

*śrī gauḍa-maṇḍala-bhūmi, jevā jāne cintāmaṇi,
tā'ra haya vraja-bhūme vāsa*

One who knows the land of Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala to be spiritual touchstone achieves residence in the land of Vraja.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has very similarly sung:

*gauḍa-vraja-jane, bheda nā dekhibo,
haibo varaja-vāsī
dhāmera svarūpa, sphuribe nayane,
haibo rādhāra dāsī*

I shall see no distinction between the residents of Gauḍa and those of Vraja, and will thus become a true Vrajavāsī myself. The transcendental form of the *dhāma* will appear to my vision, and I shall become a maidservant of Śrī Rādhā.

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has sung:

*hari hari! āra ki emana daśa habo
kabe vṛṣabhānu pure, āhīrī gopera ghare,
tanayā haiyā janamibo*

When will I take birth as a *gopī* in the town of Mahārāja Vṛṣabhānu (Varsānā), where many *gopas* and *gopīs* live? O Lord Hari, Lord Hari will I someday attain this condition of life?

*yāvate āmāra kabe, e pāṇi grahana habe,
vasati karibo kabe tāya
sakhīra parama śreṣṭha, ye haya tāhāra preṣṭha,
sevana karibo tāra pāya*

When will I be married in the village of Yāvat and when can I live there? When can I serve the lotus-feet of the dearmost maid-servant (Rūpa Mañjari) or of the best of *sakhīs* (Lalitā)?"

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has described this mood of Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura in this *kīrtana* of *śaraṇāgati*:

*dekhite dekhite, bhulibo vā kabe,
nija-sthūla-paricaya
nayane heribo, vrāja-pura-śobhā,
nitya cid-ānanda-māyā*

When, before my very sight, will my bodily self-conception disappear? Then I shall behold, with my own eyes, the exquisite beauty of Vraja, full of eternal spiritual cognizance and bliss.

*vṛṣabhānu-pure, janama laibo,
yāvate vivāha ha'be
vrāja-gopī-bhāva, haibe svabhāva,
āna-bhāva nā rahibe*

At that time, I shall take birth in the village of Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja, and my marriage will occur in Yāvata. My sole disposition and character will be that of a *vrāja-gopī*. Any other mood will not remain.

*nija-siddha-deha, nija-siddha-nāma,
nija-rūpa-sva-vasana*

*rādhā-kṛpā-bale, labhibo vā kabe,
krṣṇa-prema-prakaraṇa*

When shall I obtain, by the power of Śrī Rādhā's mercy, my perfected spiritual body, my perfected spiritual name, and my own form and dress—true initiation into the realm of *krṣṇa-prema*?

Although these *lālasamayī-kīrtanas* of these two *ācāryas*, who are the best of Rūpānugas, bear the same moods, they still bear a distinct specialty that only those whose moods are in complete accordance with theirs (because of having sincerely followed the *ācāryas* in all respects) will be able to realize this uniqueness. No one else can grasp these moods. Unless we bathe in the moods of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's line, the essence of Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura's *prārthanā* prayers will not be understood even if they are thoroughly studied a hundred or more times. Rather, by independently reading these prayers, the practitioner may even harm himself rather than benefiting himself. He may then become a *prākṛta-sahajīya*.

Like the confluence of the Triveni, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's line of thought is a confluence of Bhakti Gaṅgā, Yamunā, and Sarasvatī. Gaurajana Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has manifested the flow of *śuddha-bhakti* Gaṅgā. The incarnation of Thanesvari Jagannātha, that is Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, brought Śrīla Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja from Vraja-maṇḍala to Navadvīpa-dhāma. Thus, the nectarean flow of *śuddha-bhakti* Gaṅgā was combined with the flow of the service of Yamunā, and which in turn heralded the attainment of *sakhītvā* (to become an attendant, or companion, of Śrīmatī Rādhikā). And Śrī Caitanya

Sarasvatī, who appeared in Śrī Kṣetra-dhāma (Jagannātha Puri), later arrived in Śrī Gauda-maṇḍala to combine these two currents of divine thought. Hence, he manifested the 'Tridhārā,' or the confluence of three currents of divinity.

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has sung:

*ṭhākura vaiṣṇava-gaṇa, kari ei nivedana,
mo bādo adhama durācāra
dāruṇa saṁsāra-nidhi, tāhe dubāilo vidhi,
keṣe dhori' more karo pāra*

O worshipful Vaiṣṇavas, I humbly submit this prayer to you. I am an extremely fallen and wicked soul, and my fate is causing me to drown in the terrible ocean of material existence. Take hold of the hair on my head and rescue me from this ocean.

*ei-bāra karuṇā karo vaiṣṇava-gosāi
patita-pāvana tomā vine keho nāi*

O Vaiṣṇava Gosāi, be merciful to me now. You are the savior of the fallen souls. Except for you, there is no one [who can deliver me].

By these prayers, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura instructed everyone on how to pray to the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas. Analogously, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura penned the following *kīrtana* in his *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru's Dainyamayī-prārthanā*:

*gala-vastra kṛtāñjali vaiṣṇava-nikāṭe
dante tṛṇa kori' dādāibo niṣkapāṭe*

With a cloth around my neck, my hands folded, and straw between my teeth, I shall stand before the Vaiṣṇavas, free of duplicity.

*kādiyā kādiyā jānāibo duḥkha-grāma
saṁsāra-anala hoite māgibo viśrāma*

Bitterly weeping, I shall relay all my miseries and beg for relief from the blazing fire of material existence.

And he also sang:

*kṛpā karo vaiṣṇava ṭhākura
sambandha jāniyā, bhajite bhajite,
abhimāna hau dūra*

Please bestow your mercy, O Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura, so that I will know my relationship with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and thus constantly engage in *bhajana*. In this way, my false ego may be dispelled.

In another *kīrtana*, a similar mood is echoed:

*ohe! vaiṣṇava ṭhākura, dayāra sāgara,
e dāse karuṇā kori'
diyā pada-chāyā, śodha he āmāre,
tomāra carāṇa dhori*

O Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura, you are an ocean of mercy. Being compassionate upon this servant, purify me by giving me the shade of your feet, of which I take hold.

In these *kīrtanas*, it is repeatedly stated that *kṛṣṇa-sevā* cannot be attained without the grace of the *āśraya-vigraha* (the abode of

devotion). Thus, the *rūpānugatva* of the two Thākuras is shown here. By these *kīrtanas*, the two Thākuras are seen as prominent preachers of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha's instructions, moods, and services. This—being the follower of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha—is indeed their actual identification.

Raktaka, Patraka, Citraka, Sudhama, Śrīdhāma, Subala, Nanda, Yaśodā, and the *gopīs* are the *āśraya-vigrahas* (abodes of devotion) for *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, and *madhura-rasa* respectively. Without the shelter of the lotus feet of these Vaiṣṇava Thākuras, Parabrahma Śrī Kṛṣṇa cannot be known: *nānyah panthā vidyate ayanāya*.

The path shown by Rūpa-Raghunātha leads to this attainment—to serving Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa according to one particular *rasa*. In some of his *kīrtanas*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has used the word 'Thākura' instead of the word 'Vaiṣṇava.' Śrīla Narottama dāsa Thākura has said 'Thākura Vaiṣṇava,' and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has said, 'Vaiṣṇava Thākura.' They mean the same.

One should not think that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has only translated the prayers or composed his prayers of *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru* while following the moods of the previous *ācāryas*. The essence of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is found in every *kīrtana* of his.

*durlabha mānava-janma labhiyā samsāre
kṛṣṇa nā bhajinu—duḥkha kahibo kāhāre?*

After attaining this rare human birth in the material world, I have not worshiped Śrī Kṛṣṇa. To whom shall I tell my sorrows?

*saṁanya vaidika-dharma artha-phala-prada
artha haite kāma-lābha mudhera sampada*

But we see that the general characteristic of the Vedic injunctions is that they are meant for facilitating the success of economic development and from such wealth comes the fulfillment of lusty desires for sense gratification, which is usually the prized treasure of fools.

This *kīrtana* explains the essence of the following *śloka* of the *Bhagavad-gītā*:

*trai-guṇya-visayā vedā
nistrai-guṇyo bhavārjuna
nirdvandvo nitya-sattva-stho
niryoga-kṣema ātmavān*

Bhagavad-gītā 2.45

The Vedas mainly deal with the subject of the three modes of material nature. Rise above these modes, O Arjuna. Be transcendental to all of them. Be free from all dualities and from all anxieties for gain and safety, and be established in the Self.

The *kīrtanas* written by great personalities like, Mālādhara Vāsu, Gūṇarāja Khān (predecessors of Caṇḍīdāsa, Vidyāpati, and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu), and the *kīrtanas* written by the contemporaries and associates of Mahāprabhu, especially describe *līlā-kathā* (the pastimes of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa). Therefore, the *anartha*-stricken *jīvas* who are excessively attached to lust, anger, body, and their homes become bewildered by the beauty of these *kīrtanas*. Despite being crippled by *anarthas* and offenses,

which distinctly portray their spiritual immaturity, they discuss certain pastimes that are only fit to be contemplated upon by the crest-jewel of liberated personalities. Thus, they become afflicted by *anarthas* and offenses.

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura's *Prārthanā* and *Prema-bhakti-candrikā* contain instructions that destroy the *anarthas* of the *jīvas* at the root. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *kīrtanas* then further explain the moods of Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya's *kīrtanas* by explaining the nature of *sambandha-jñāna*. This *sambandha-jñāna* has been described with the use of adjectives, considerations, and logic.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura greatly became distressed upon witnessing the unfortunate condition of the *prākṛta-sahajiyās*, *anyābhilāśīs*, *karmīs*, *jñānīs*, *yogīs*, and the *tapasvīs*, whose marked aversion to Kṛṣṇa only accelerated their downfall. The plight of the *sāṁśayavādīs* (the doubtful) who submit to the half-hen logic of *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa-brahma*, and those who supposedly delight themselves on the waves of Western education also made Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sorrowful. The degraded condition of the residents of this world, which is characterized by their aversion, and extraneous desires is a cause of great concern for the *mahājanas*.

Therefore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura penned *kīrtanas* that delineated *sambandha-jñāna* though the means of *anvaya* (direct) and *vyatirekha* (indirect). Thus, he composed *kīrtanas* that contained unparalleled logic; indeed, his *kīrtanas* are second to none. There are those who desire to follow the *kīrtanas* of the Gaudiya Vaiṣṇava line, yet they conclude their endeavors after they have studied Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura's *Prema-bhakti-*

candrikā and *Prārthanā*. They even audaciously think, "We will become established in Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava *dharma*, and especially in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī even, without following the *kīrtanas* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura."

Because of such speculation, they cheat themselves of relishing the fruit of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *prema-kalpa-taru*, the wish-fulfilling tree of *prema*. The *kīrtanas* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura don't just speak of the essence of the pure *bhakti-siddhānta* of the predecessor Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*. Without serving the temple of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's literature, no one in present times can call himself a 'Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava,' or enter the *rūpānuga* line. The direct evidence of this is that those who separated themselves from the prose and poetry of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura while trying to discuss the literature of the previous *ācāryas*, became the *prākṛta-sahajiyās* of contemporary society. Many even concocted philosophies that were in complete contrast to *tattva-siddhānta* and pure devotion. These philosophies only spoke of *rasābhāṣa* (overlapping of devotional mellites). Because of being deviated from the line of *śuddha-bhakti*, they fell from the path of *rūpānuga-vaiṣṇava-dharma*. Their *sādhana* became null and void.

The *kīrtanas* composed by the previous *ācāryas* are in complete accordance with *tattva-siddhānta*. Yet, the unqualified sing these *kīrtanas* without any consideration of time, place, and circumstance. Desiring women, wealth, and prestige, they sing these *kīrtanas* at inappropriate gatherings. They thus initiate the flow of sin, illicit behavior, and offenses. During the manifest presence of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the songs, and dramas of the *prākṛta-sahajiyās* were already being heard, and seen.

These performances were full of speculations that contradicted *bhakti-siddhānta*; *rasābhāsa* was also especially seen in these performances. Therefore, rather than composing many *līlā-kīrtanas*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura penned many *kīrtanas* that were suffused with the *tattva* of *sambandha-jñāna*. And he repeatedly emphasised on *sambandha-jñāna* in all the *līlā-kīrtanas* he has authored.

Now we will hear (from *Sajjana Tosanī*, Year 6, Volume 2) what Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had to say in regard to the *kīrtanas* that were composed and sung during his time:

"Nowadays, many *kīrtana-sampradāyas* are seen. Some groups address themselves as *Manohara-sāhī Saṅgīta*. Before singing, the members of these groups seat themselves and start playing on the *mṛdaṅga*. And then they start practicing their melodies. They then proceed to sing a *kīrtana* that is related to Śrī Gauracandra. Corresponding to the *kīrtana* of Śrī Gauracandra that they have just sung, they then stage a dramatic performance of a pastime of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. While Śrī Gauracandra's *kīrtana* is being sung, the singer, players of instruments, and the listeners stand up. After they have finished their *gaura-gītā*, they sit down and listen to *kṛṣṇa-gītā*. Their *kīrtanas* are mainly based on the *kīrtanas* of the previous *mahājanas*. The householder who organizes these *kīrtanas*, arranges for sandalwood paste and flower garlands. After placing a garland on the *mṛdaṅga*, the householder garlands the singer, players of musical instruments, and the members of the audience.

Although these *kīrtanas* are known as *Manohara-sāhī* among the general people, upon further inquiry, it is seen that

not all *kīrtanas* can be addressed as Manohara-sāhī. The seed of this form of *kīrtana* was sown during Mahāprabhu's time. It was sown in the direct presence of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī. But these *kīrtanas* were not sung during that time. These *kīrtanas* were sung during the time of Śrī Śrīnivāsa Ācārya Prabhu.

Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, and Śyāmānanda Prabhu resided in Vṛndāvana and became the *śikṣā* disciples of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. After receiving Jīva Gosvāmī's permission, they arranged for a manual for singing *kīrtanas* in certain melodies. These three personalities were greatly learned in the art of composing and singing *kīrtanas*. They were great experts in Delhi's Kalayāti-vidyā. These three personalities were one soul in three bodies, for their hearts and lives were one. But they resided in different provinces.

Śrīnivāsa Ācārya illuminated the land of Kaṭoyā-pradeśa (the region surrounding Kaṭvā and Jājīgrāma). This province was within Manohara-sāhī Pargaṇā. Therefore, his style of *kīrtanas* are called, 'Manohara-sāhī Gāna.' Śrī Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura was a resident of Kheturi-grāma, which was a part of Garāṇa-hāti, or Gadera-hāṭa Pargaṇā of the Rājasāhī district. Therefore, his style of *kīrtanas* are called 'Garāṇa-hāṭī Gāna.' Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu used to reside in the Medinīpura district. His style of *kīrtanas* were called, 'Reṇetī Gāna.' Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī had conferred the title 'Prabhu' to Śyāmānanda.

Becoming greatly enthusiastic upon receiving Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's permission and blessings, the three *kīrtana-ācāryas* went to their respective provinces. These three *mahātmās* were the jewels of Gauḍa-bhūmi. At first glance, it seemed that they were not as learned as the Gosvāmīs were in

Sanskrit because they didn't write any Sanskrit books. They were greatly learned, and realized in *vraja-rasa's bhajana*. Also, they were well-versed in *vaiṣṇava-siddhānta*, and in the art of singing for the Lord's pleasure. A period of gloom fell over the Vaiṣṇava world after Mahāprabhu's disappearance. A lack of fit recipients in the lineage of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, and the entry of many speculative philosophies made Gauda-bhūmi divested of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's discipline. The followers of Viracandra Prabhu were independent, and they could not bring Gauda-maṇḍala under their control. Confusion was also seen among the sons, and descendants of Śrī Advaita Acarya. All of Mahāprabhu's associates started to gradually disappear. Taking undue advantage, many deviant *sahajīya* groups like Bāul, Sahajīyā, Daraveśa, Sāñi, and other such sects started preaching their fabricated ideas.

People in general have special faith in the names of Śrī Caitanya and Nityānanda. But the members of the deviant groups started preaching their philosophies to the unfortunate *jīvas* on the pretext of imparting instructions on *sanātana-dharma*. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī was the only *vaiṣṇava-ācārya* then. He was a Vrajavāsī. Upon listening to the regretful condition of Gauda-maṇḍala, he sent Śrīnivāsa Acarya, Narottoma dāsa Ṭhākura, and Śyāmānanda Prabhu there after establishing them as the *ācāryas* of Gauda-maṇḍala's *dharma*. Along with his associates, he also sent all the Gaudiya Vaiṣṇava scriptures to Gauda-bhūmi. By Mahāprabhu's desire, all the scriptures were stolen on the way. Being devoid of these scriptures, the three *ācāryas* took shelter of their *kīrtanas* on the strength of their *bhajana* and started preaching pure *vaiṣṇava-dharma*.

By their endeavors, the sun of *vaiṣṇava-dharma* rose on the horizon of this world again. And, preaching was conducted even more forcefully than even before. It would not be an exaggeration to call these three *ācāryas* the jewels of Gauda-maṇḍala.

The influence of Kali-yuga is so fearsome that the work of *sat-kārya* (work effectuated with the aim of propagating *sanātana-dharma*) will not run for long. After the disappearance of the three *ācāryas* and some of the *mahājanas* (of whom Śrīla Rāmacandra Kavirāja, Rasikānanda Prabhu, Śrīla Govinda dāsa Kavirāja, and Gaṅgā-Nārāyaṇa Cakravartī are prominent), *parama-dharma* again started to become unmanifest. The instructions of *śuddha-bhakti* started to disappear from Gauḍa-bhūmi. Vaiṣṇavas, śaktas (worshippers of Durgā-devī), *karma-kāṇḍis*, and the seminal descendants of the *ācāryas* started to preach *vaiṣṇava-dharma*. As a result of such amalgamation, the *śuddha-vaiṣṇava-dharma* propagated by Śrī Gaurāṅga-Nityānanda, Advaita Ācārya, and their followers started to distance herself from the eyes of everyone. The absence of the *ācāryas* only accelerated the efforts of the Bāuls, *Sahajiyās*, and other unauthorized sects. The unfortunate condition of *vaiṣṇava-dharma* during that time still persists to this day.

Therefore, teachings that are completely contradictory to *vaiṣṇava-dharma* are being taught everywhere. As a result, some address Māyāvāda as *vaiṣṇava-dharma*, while others unscrupulously adopt a limb of *śuddha-dharma* and combine this limb with Māyāvāda, or *karmavāda*, to produce a perverted form of *vaiṣṇava-dharma*.

*arcāyām eva haraye
pūjāṁ yaḥ śraddhayehate
na tad-bhakteṣu cānyeṣu
sa bhaktāḥ prākṛtaḥ smṛtaḥ*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.2.47

A devotee who faithfully engages in the worship of the Deity in the temple but does not behave properly toward other devotees or people in general is called a *prākṛta-bhakta*, a materialistic devotee, and is considered to be in the lowest position.

According to this logic, those who are innocent are to be accepted as *kaniṣṭha-vaiṣṇavas*. There is always a dearth of intelligent pure Vaiṣṇavas. When there is an absence of such instructors, the plight of the *jīvas* is reflected on society at large. And this is the condition of Gauḍa-maṇḍala today. Yet, we don't have the chance to discuss the other discrepancies that have entered our line of thought.

Garāṇahāti *kīrtana* is barely sung these days. And only a few know what actual *Manohara-sāhī-kīrtana* is. It is not appropriate to add new letters to *Manohara-sāhī kīrtana*. The letters that the *mahājanas* have used to compose *kīrtanas* are sufficient. The line of *Manohara-sāhī kīrtana* is unprecedented. By changing the melodies a couple of times, the same *kīrtana* can be sung continuously. Such *kīrtanas* will augment the moods of devotion in the listeners' hearts.

The words of the *mahājanas* never contain *rasābhāṣa*, or anything that is opposed to a proper understanding of *vaiṣṇava-siddhānta*. When singers, or those who are ignorant of the proper understanding of *rasa* inappropriately add

their own words, the result only ends up being *rasābhāsa* and opposed to *siddhānta*. *Vaiṣṇava-siddhānta* is very deep. Those who have performed *sādhu-saṅga* for many years, discussing pure *vaiṣṇava-dharma*, will never do anything opposed to *siddhānta*. *Vaiṣṇava-rasa* is also very deep. The *rasa* of *Vaiṣṇava* embellishments, and the *rasa* of mundane embellishments can never be the same. Paid singers don't associate with *sādhus*; they also don't know *vaiṣṇava-siddhānta*. Thus, their words are like thunderbolts to the *Vaiṣṇavas*.

As mentioned before, very few know what *Manohara-sāhī kīrtana* is. By listening to their *kīrtana*, one's ears become greatly enlivened. By listening to such *kīrtanas* even once, the listener gains an understanding of what *cinmaya-rasa* is. Therefore, they no longer desire to hear the songs sung by paid singers.

Such paid singers are 'rasika' in name only. They don't know what factual *rasa* is, and they also oppose *vaiṣṇava-siddhānta*. Their songs contain many melodies, and embellishments—but there is nothing of value in their songs. Thus, the *Vaiṣṇavas* never lend their ears to such musical exhibitions. To entertain women, and the unintelligent, they sing ostentatious long melodies, and try foolishly eclipsing the beauty of the *mahājanas' kīrtanas*. While listening to their songs, the unintelligent praise these singers, and shower them with money. Therefore, such singers become very proud.

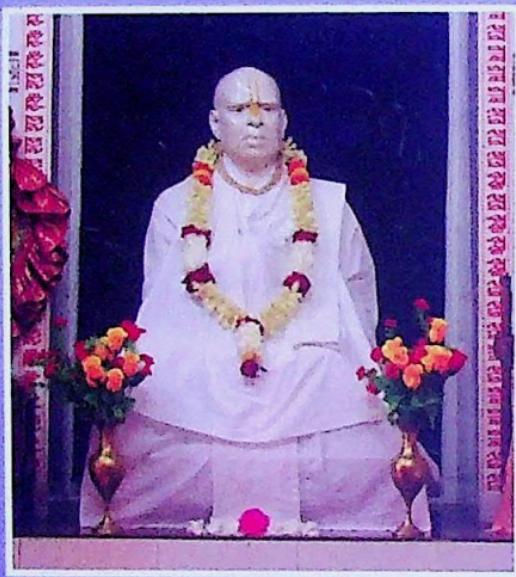
There is another frightful consideration about these singers. The *kīrtanas* of Śrī Rādhā-Govinda's *śrīṅgāra-līlā* constitute the *sādhaka's nitya-bhajana*, and are his principal form of worship. It is highly inappropriate, and offensive to sing such *kīrtanas* in the presence of ordinary people.

*āpana bhajana kathā, na kahibo yathā tathā
ihate haibo savadhāna*

"I'll be cautious to not reveal my own *bhajana* here and there."

By having faith in these words of the *ācāryas*, the listeners will realize that it is offensive to listen to 'rāsa-gāna' from paid singers. Such offensive acts of the singers and listeners have gone unnoticed. Presently, many people in this world are subject to transformation. They only like superficial displays; in the name of *bhajana*, they engage in fostering many speculative ideas. The gravity of *śringāra-rasa* will not remain as long as such inappropriate and unapproved ideas are not stopped from being promulgated.

"O devotees! Please don't listen to the songs of *rasa* which are sung by selfish singers in the assembly of listeners who delight themselves in enjoying mundane pleasures. Please endeavor to stop the propagation of such ideas in Vaiṣṇava circles. It is appropriate to sing *kīrtanas* and prayers of *dāsyarasa* in the presence of everyone. You may listen to songs of *rasa* in the assembly of *rasika* Vaiṣṇavas who have an unmixed mood of pure devotion. By listening to such *kīrtanas* in their presence, you will experience the *bhajana-bhāva* that corresponds to your *siddha-svarūpa*. If the process of singing such *kīrtanas* is lost—then let it be, for such actions will result in the auspiciousness of the Vaiṣṇavas. It is the duty of Kali Mahārāja to accommodate places where songs of *rasa* are sung with the aim of accruing wealth and gratifying the senses."



*nirasya vighnān iha bhakti-gaṅgā-
pravāhanenoddhṛta-sarva-lokaḥ
bhagiratho nitya-dhiyāṁ padāṁ kiṁ
bhaved asau bhaktivinoda-devaḥ*

Will that divine personality, *bhakti-bhagiratha* Śrila Bhaktivedanta Ṭhākura, who has delivered the entire world by casting away all obstacles on the path of *bhakti* and bringing forth the current of the Ganges River of *bhakti*, forever become the object of my constant meditation?



Bhaktabandhav